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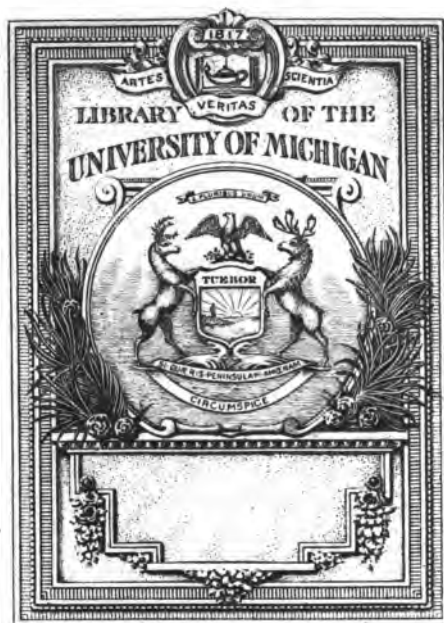
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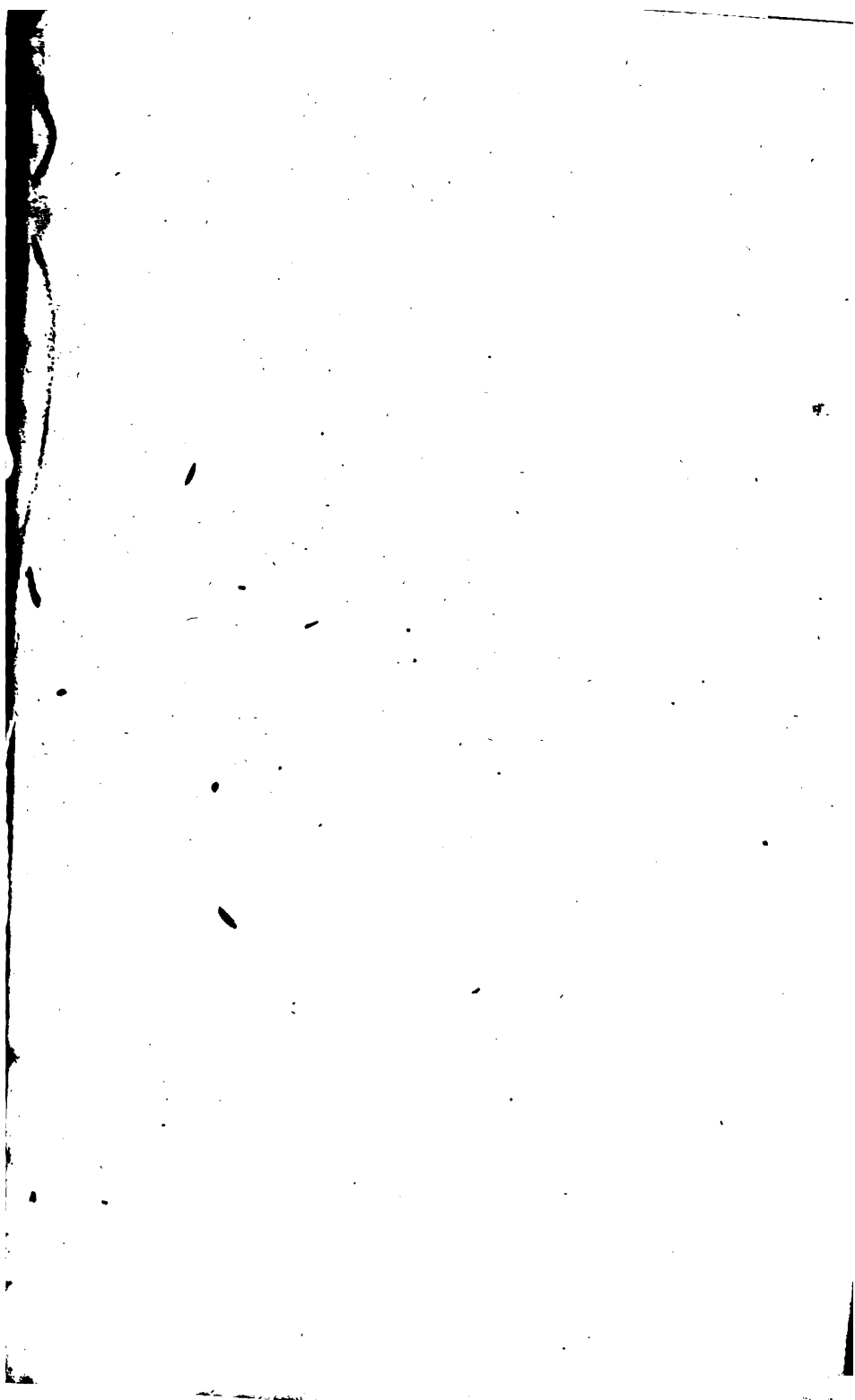
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THE
HISTORY
OF
EGYPT;

FROM
THE EARLIEST ACCOUNTS OF THAT COUNTRY,
TILL THE
EXPULSION OF THE FRENCH FROM ALEXANDRIA,
IN THE YEAR 1801.

By JAMES WILSON, D. D.
Minister of Falkirk.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

Volume III.

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HISTORY

OF

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BOOK IX.

CHAP. I.

The Ottoman dynasty.... Selim conquers Egypt.... The constitution of its government as a province.... Soliman the Magnificent.... Rhodes taken by the Turks.... The Knights settle in Malta.... The Druses.... The Beys of Egypt discontented.... Their situation in the government.... Ibrahim.... Ali Bey.... Sheik Daher, and the affairs of Syria.... Mohammed Bey.... Murad and Ibrahim govern in common.... The Ottomans resume their power in Egypt.

A. D. 1517. **W** E are now to contemplate a new race of princes extending their sway over Egypt;
A. H. 923. **A**
Vol. III.

but that country, being placed again in the state of a dependent nation, was not cherished with a fatherly care, nor protected in its few remaining rights and enjoyments. It had long been oppressed by a succession of foreign despots, who sat by violence on its throne; but it was now destitute of its sovereign's presence; and, at a distance from the centre of power, it began to languish and sink lower in the scale of nations.

The dynasty, to which Egypt now belonged, received its name from the victorious prince Othman, who was the grandson of the celebrated adventurer Soliman.

This warrior appears to have descended from that race of Tartars, who are generally denominated Turks. Whither they had this appellation from the uncouthness of their figure, or the helmet-like appearance of that part of the Altaian mountains, where they originally dwelt; whither they were so called, from their skill in obtaining the metals

which abound in their native mountains, and from their dexterity in making weapons of war, since, in the language of their country, Turk signifies a helmet, or from whatever circumstance they derived their name, is neither important; nor worthy of serious inquiry. But the descent and emigration of this warlike people, are deeply involved in that dark and undigested mass of traditionary materials, which we cannot completely unravel, nor fully understand. Soliman, the first person of that race who was brought into notice, has been stated in history as the successful leader of a wandering, ferocious horde; while the Ottoman writers, to stamp their race with dignity, and connect them with a royal lineage, have pointed out Soliman as the prince of Nera, on the borders of the Caspian sea.¹

In those rude and turbulent times,

¹ Cantemir's preface, p. 7; & Deguignes, tom. i, part 2. p. 371.

the difference between the seemingly opposite situations, which have been assigned to Soliman, is not in reality so vast as a slight consideration might lead us to suppose. In the revolutionary movements of that age and country, sovereign princes were scarcely established by conquest, when newly created powers overthrew them; and the general of successful warriors, was sometimes only raised to a throne, to be instantly cast down by a triumphant adventurer. Where there was no claim by inheritance, and where family possession had created no preference in the sentiments of nations, the supreme authority was fleeting in its nature; and there was little ceremony in bestowing the sceptre, or divesting princes of the regal power.

Whatever was the rank of this adventurer, Soliman, the origin of his family must be sought for among the uncultivated tribes of Scythians and Tartars. In the tendency to general migration, which at one period pervaded the

whole nations of the north and east, the Tartar hordes pushed forward into the regions of the west, and founded a temporary abode in Persia, or Asia Minor. Exposed to the power of Genghis Chan, they removed into Adherbejan, or Media; and were probably driven from this settlement, by the approach and terror of the Moguls.

Amid some of those changes and events, Soliman lost his life. Orthogrul, or Orthogul, one of his sons, took shelter in the dominions of Al Adin, the sultan of Iconium. The princes of this dynasty being severely pressed by their powerful neighbours, and the kingdom hastening to dissolution, the fugitive Orthogul displayed his bravery in supporting the feeble state. His skill and success in the field recommended him to the favour and friendship of Al Adin. Upon the death of Orthogul, the sultan of Iconium, took Othman, the son of his departed friend, and raised him to high and uncommon honours.

The bravery and good fortune of the father descended to the son with a pleasing increase; and, upon the death of Al Adin, and the dissolution of the Seljucidan kingdom of Iconium, the dominions were divided among many claimants; but the power and fame of young Othman conferred upon him the ascendancy, and we soon find him the constituted sultan of the Turks. On account of the fierce and uncultivated manners of that people, the name of Turk implied some degree of odium, and therefore the new sultan of those tribes denominated his people Othmans. This Arabic term is pronounced by the Turks as if written Osman, but the Turkish government is by us denominated the Ottoman. The small village Soguta, in the district of Bithynia, upon the Asiatic side of the Black sea and straits of Constantinople, is considered as the early residence of the family of Othmâm, and to this day it enjoys privileges which were conferred upon it on

that account. The Ottomans appear to have descended from the Guzian, or Oguzian Turks, who have also been called Uzes, and have enlarged their dominions to a vast extent.^a

Selim remained a considerable time in Egypt after he had brought it into subjection, and carefully settled the affairs of that country. At the head of the government he placed a pasha or viceroy, with various subordinate officers of state. Reviewing this government, in its full form, we observe a diyan or council of regency, composed of those who commanded the different military corps, together with the pasha, who was the constituted and regular president. Twenty-four Mamlukes, with the dignity of begs, beys, or princes, were intrusted with the government of the various districts and departments of Egypt. From among those beys were chosen the

^a Cantemir, p. 1, 2, &c.; et Deguignes, tom. i, part ii, p. 372, &c.

Sheik al Belled, or governor of Grand Cairo ; the Janizary Aga, or commander of that corps ; the Defterdar, or accountant-general ; the Emir al Hage, or conductor of the caravan ; the Emir al Said, or governor of Upper Egypt ; and the Sheik al Bikkari, or director of the sherifs. In subordination to those, there were cashieps, or deputies, and other officers of inferior note.

Selim conveyed with him from Grand Cairo to Constantinople, the caliph, or spiritual head of the Mohammedan religion. In the course of our inquiries we have seen that high office stripped of its temporal powers ; and, when Selim conquered Egypt, the caliph was living in obscurity, and supported by the precarious bounty of a weak and distracted court. Upon the death of this caliph, another pontiff was appointed in his stead ; but a musti was soon chosen and constituted the supreme director of the Mohammedan faith. This chief ecclesiastic resides at Constantin-

ple ; but inferior imams are placed at the head of the four different religious sects which prevail in Egypt. A mulla, or chief judge, with caëis under him, sit upon the tribunal ; but we shall find, in the progress of this history, that they were in some measure superseded by the encroaching power of the beys. The residence of the pasha was appointed to be in the castle of Grand Cairo, and there the divan was ordained to meet. Cair was the first pasha, and Gazel, who had joined him in betraying the interests of the last sultan of Egypt, and who had contributed so essentially to the success of Selim in subduing that country, was constituted governor of the Syrian districts.*

But we are not to suppose that the government of Egypt assumed so regular a form at the commencement of its connection with the Ottoman power.

* Volney, tom. i, ch. 7 ; and Brown's Travels, ch. 5.

Some of those wise arrangements, which have been specified, were probably devised by Soliman I, who, on account of his prudent and liberal institutions, was stiled the Magnificent, and the finishing of the system would naturally spring up from contingent events. . Instead of twenty-four beys, there were formerly sixteen sanjiaks under the direction of the pasha of Egypt, and it may be presumed, that the Mamlukes usurped their place, acquired the dignity of beys, and, according to circumstances, were increased in number to twenty-four. In the early times of the Ottoman government, there were only two beys, who were dignified with the name of Beylerbey, or Prince of princes. One of those exalted governors presided over the dominions, which in Europe belonged to Constantinople, and the other had the chief direction of Asia Minor, and the remaining departments in the east; but in proportion as the Ottoman empire

was enlarged, so the number of beyler-beys was increased.^c

The constitution of Egypt was totally different from that of the other provinces of Constantinople, and though it was a situation of great importance, yet the governor of Grand Cairo had no authority beyond the precincts of Egypt. The peculiar constitution of that government does not appear to have been formed with the view of conferring special honours upon Egypt, but seems rather to have been devised for the express purpose of holding it fast in the fetters of Constantinople. If the supreme power of a country, so rich and discontented, had been solely lodged with the pasha, he might have been tempted to exercise his influence and authority to acquire a sovereign command, but his operations were under the check and controul of the divan. The sanjiaks, or beys, though

^c Hist. of the Turks, p. 1391; and *ibid*, Knolles's Brief discourse on the Turkish empire.

dependant on the divan, had the command of the tribute in their respective provinces, and, having thus a restraint over the springs of government, both military and civil, the various parts of the constitution were in a state of mutual jealousy, and no collusion, or rebellious practices, could easily ensue.

A. D. 1520.—Soliman I succeeded his father Selim, who died in the midst of his ambition; and, while his hostile views were toward Persia, the heart of Gazel, the governor of Syria, beat high with ambition; and, being regardless of duty or honour, he seized upon the time of Selim's death to throw off his allegiance to the court of Constantinople, and become sole master of the province which was committed to his care. Having been accustomed to walk in the way of deceit, he was ready to betray the grand signior as he had formerly done the sultan of Egypt. For this purpose he dispatched a trusty messenger to Grand Cairo, with seducing proposals to his

friend Cair. But the pasha of that country, being influenced by fear or a sense of duty, refused his concurrence; and, pursuing the conduct of those turbulent and bloody times, he put the Syrian messenger to death, and discovered the plot to the emperor of Constantinople.

Gazel, the rebellious governor of Syria, waited long and impatiently for the arrival of the confidential messenger whom he had sent into Egypt; but at length he entertained suspicions of what in reality had been done; and, fleeing to arms, he put himself instantly into a posture of defence. He solicited assistance from the knights of Rhodes; and, before the armies of Constantinople arrived, his allies of that island had joined him, and he was not only able to quit his defensive position, but had also subdued several places of strength which belonged to the Ottomans, and which were not included within the boundaries of the Syrian province.

At length the troops of Soliman ap-

peared in terrible array, under the command of Ferhad Pasha, the husband of the grand signior's aunt, and a general of much fame and brilliant success. The two armies met in battle, with all the ardour of victory, and with a large share of mutual rancour. The Syrian troops were comparatively few, yet their address and desperate valour enabled them for a while to maintain against the Ottomans an equality of success; but the armies of Constantinople prevailed, and Gazel, having performed prodigies of valour, was left dead on the field of battle. Thus the Ottomans obtained more secure possession of Syria, and their confidence in the fidelity of Egypt received an accession of strength.

Soliman, who was then emperor of Constantinople, discovered a mind much better-fitted to govern than any who had gone before him. The power of the Ottomans was acquired by the point of the sword, and had hitherto been exercised with violence and cruelty. The

severities which appeared in the former reigns were mitigated by Soliman, and he offered redress to those of his subjects who had suffered wrongs. At the commencement of his reign, the joy of protection and safety smiled throughout the empire, and he was hailed as the father and the friend of his country. But he too was influenced by a spirit of conquest, and the extending of his empire was a favourite object of pursuit. To secure the enlargement of his power in Europe, the strong town and castle of Belgrade must be taken, and to give him the command of the Mediterranean sea, the island of Rhodes must also be subdued.

Having been successful in taking Belgrade, he turned the eye of his ambition toward Rhodes, and a pretence for attacking that island was readily presented, by the assistance which the knights had lately given to Gazel, the rebel governor of Syria. Mustapha, who was married to the grand signior's sister,

was appointed to command a numerous fleet ; and, when the whole forces were collected from Constantinople, Syria, and Egypt, they amounted to 400 sail of ships, 140,000 soldiers, and 60,000 pioneers. The city of Rhodes was attacked with ardour, and defended with bravery. On the part of the besiegers, treachery was joined to valour, and, on the part of the besieged address, vigour, and fortitude, were conspicuously displayed. A. D. 1522, after a struggle which lasted almost six months, the island of Rhodes was surrendered to the Ottoman power.

Soliman exercised considerable lenity toward the knights in general, and was peculiarly attentive to the venerable Philip de Villiers de L'Isle Adam, who at that time was grand-master of the order. Sufficient time having been allowed for arranging the affairs of the community, the grand-master, with the whole body of the knights, left their favourite abode in Rhodes upon the first

of January A. D. 1523; and, landing at Crete, or Candia,^d were long tossed about without finding a place of permanent rest. While the affairs of Soliman were thus prospering in Rhodes, the situation of Egypt was critical and alarming. Cair, the governor or pasha of that province, died, and the weight of his authority being removed, discontents sprung up, and rebellion started into view. To check the progress of this insurrection, the emperor sent Mustapha into Egypt with five ships and a proportional number of troops. Quickly he arrived at Alexandria, penetrated the country, and having taken the rebels by surprise, they were easily and instantly overcome.

The history of Mustapha is dark and perplexing, for it has been asserted, that,

^d It has been stated, that a ruined fortification, upon the top of an abrupt rock, on the east side of the entrance into the bay of Mormorice, marks one of those places of refuge where the knights of Rhodes took shelter till they found a settlement in Malta.—Captain Walsh's Journal, p. 51.

during the siege of Rhodes, when the grand signior was in danger of being repulsed, he burst into a fit of rage, and threatened to destroy Mustapha, as having both advised him to invade the island, and having been deficient as a commander in carrying on the operations of the war. By the entreaties of his friends, he was delivered from death, but was disgraced and banished from the presence of the sultan. If this statement be genuine, he must afterwards have been restored to favour, for he was soon appointed to the high station where we found him in Egypt. Having there laid hold upon the vast riches which belonged to Cair, the late pasha, and sitting also in the chair of authority, he made an attempt to become independent of the Ottoman court. To this project he might be stimulated by the love of that power which seemed to invite his acceptance, or from a principle of revenge against Soliman, who had treated him so severely at Rhodes. But it is otherwise stated,

that the turbulent spirit of Egypt burst out again with redoubled violence; and Mustapha, being unable to suppress it, and being exposed to much danger, was suffered to retire, and the intrepid Ahmet was appointed in his stead.*

Finding how averse the people of Egypt continued to be from the government of the Ottomans, Ahmet ingratiated himself into their favour, and resolved to become a sovereign prince. To secure the object of his wish, he was anxious to draw into his interest the christian powers of Europe, and the justly celebrated knights of Rhodes. Those soldiers, dedicated to St. John, were still unprovided with a place of settlement, for, though the emperor Charles V had offered them Malta, Goza, and Tripoli, in Barbary, yet they had not finally accepted the offer. They were not only afraid that they might be rendered de-

* Vertot, tom. iii, liv. 9; Cantemir, Solim, I, p. 177, &c.

pendent upon so powerful a sovereign, but they still encouraged a hope of being able to recover the possession of Rhodes.

Ahmet, being acquainted with this anxious wish of their heart, sent an ambassador to the grand-master of the order, and not only offered him his assistance to regain possession of their favourite island, but also gave them assurance that there was a party in Rhodes ready to receive them. But the schemes of Ahmet were revealed to the grand signior, and he instantly adopted measures which frustrated the intentions of the Egyptian governor, and defeated the views which the knights of St. John had entertained toward Rhodes. Thus was blasted every hope or prospect of repossessing that island, and now, A. D. 1530, having accepted the offer which Charles had made them, they were thence denominated knights of Malta.

To suppress the rebellion which prevailed in Egypt, the grand signior sent

the vizer Ibrahim to Grand Cairo, with power and authority to seize the helm of government. He encountered many storms in the course of his voyage, and was at length driven upon the coast of Rhodes. Having suffered so many disasters, he deemed it imprudent to continue his journey by sea, and, departing by the shortest way to Syria, he directed his route by land. When he arrived at Grand Cairo, the city was filled with consternation, and, before his troops, the rebels fled. But lest despair, or a favourable opportunity, might induce them to collect their strength, and make a desperate and perhaps successful effort, he proclaimed pardon, upon a return to obedience, and only demanded that the leaders of the rebellion should be put into his power.

Ahmet was immediately looked to as the principal person to be secured, and, having been suffocated in the bath, his body was delivered to Ibrahim, and his head was sent to Constantinople. Peace

being thus restored, Ibrahim took the vast treasures which Ahmet had amassed, and coined pieces of money in his own name, which were called Ibrahims, and were similar to the gold ducats of Venice, but inferior in value. He committed the reins of government to Soliman Pasha, and returned with much fame to Constantinople.^f

Soliman was a native of Epirus, and a zealous supporter of the grand signior's interest. The way to India which the Portuguese had discovered by the Cape of Good Hope, had mostly deprived Egypt of the eastern trade, and Soliman laid the great, but impracticable, scheme of bringing it back to its ancient channel through Alexandria. For this purpose he projected the formation of a powerful fleet in the Red sea, which might sail in strength to the Portuguese settlements in India, and overthrow their power. Abundance of wood was cut

^f Vert. tom. iij, liv. 9; et Cantemir, Sol. I,

down on the mountains of Cilicia, conveyed to Grand Cairo, and transported across the desert to the harbour of Arsinoe. There, in a short time, eighty ships and gallies were either built or collected ; but, in the peculiar circumstances of Egypt, it was found difficult to man them. Yet the zeal and fertile genius of Soliman Pasha found out an expedient for obviating that difficulty, and supplying sailors. The republic of Venice traded extensively with Egypt, and at this time many vessels of that nation were lying in the port of Alexandria, and in the branches of the Nile.

A. D. 1537.—To serve a purpose of ambition, the pasha of Egypt pretended some offence at the court, or merchants of Venice, and seizing their sailors, he put them on-board his own fleet. He committed the direction of the whole expedition to Hassan, an expert seaman, and famous pirate, who was known by the name of the Moor of Alexandria. This fleet, well equipped and well di-

rected, reached their destined port ; but, being unable to make an impression upon the Portuguese settlements, they returned disappointed to the Egyptian harbours in the Red sea.

Soliman I, however, was successful in extending the bounds of his empire. It was enlarged in Persia ; the kingdom of Hungary bowed under his power ; and other parts of Europe trembled at his approach. He and the celebrated emperor Charles V, were avowed and inveterate foes. Each of them possessed large resources, and each of them displayed address and skill. Charles was more refined in his manners, and better instructed in the art of war ; but Soliman had more extensive dominions, and his soldiers still retained a considerable portion of that violent and bloody fierceness which distinguished the armies of Bajazet I, and other founders of the Ottoman power. Wherever the Turkish armies appeared, the nations were struck with fear ; and the terror of their cruel

conduct was commensurate with the knowledge of their name. Francis I, king of France, entered into the views of Soliman, for the purpose of restraining the exorbitant and far-spreading power of Charles V. The Mediterranean sea abounded with hostile ships. There the vessels of Soliman, of Charles, and of the knights of Malta, met in dreadful conflict. There Barbarossa, the high admiral of the grand signior, Andrew Doria, the champion of the emperor Charles, and there the commanders of the Maltese gallies fought the battles of their country.

But amidst this violence of pursuit, and these chequered scenes of varying success, Soliman, upon the 4th of September A. D. 1566, having been previously worn out by fatigue and disease, bowed under the load of his affliction, and breathed his last.* We have found his government directed by better prin-

* Cant. et Vertot, liv. 11, 12.

ciples than those which had hitherto guided the Ottoman power ; but, consistently with the temper of the times, in conformity to the rudeness of his country, and wading among streams of ambition, his conduct and commands were often at variance with humanity. The jealousy of power which stalks abroad in tumultuous and revolutionary governments, entered the family retirements of Soliman ; and, by the ambition of his favourite slave Roxalana, who, by intrigue, was at length made sultanness, he put to death his own son Mustapha ; and this unnatural cruelty extended yet farther into the family of the grand signior. Upon reviewing the conduct of Soliman, we behold it blotted with guilt, and blended with many of the baser workings of weakness, violence, and ambition.

A. D. 1585.—Though the women of the seraglio were held in a state of confinement and manifest degradation, yet they frequently acquired an undue

ascendency over the mind and conduct of the Ottoman princes. In the secrecy of the seraglio, the most important deeds were often planned and matured for being brought into action. Hassan, a favourite attendant in the apartments of the women, secured the interest of Amurat III's most beloved wife, and her influence prevailed upon the grand signior to invest him with the dignity of a pasha, and place him at the head of the Egyptian government. Avarice and extortion were the predominant vices at the court of Amurat, and Hassan appears to have carried the same spirit into Egypt, in the full exercise of its power. His extortions were numerous, and the people groaned under the weight of his oppression. Discontentment appeared in every department of the state, and loud complaints were carried to the court of Constantinople.

To redress the grievances of the Egyptians, Amurat sent an active and intelligent lord of the court to Grand Cairo,

and empowered him to supersede Hassan in the government of that country. But Hassan, not waiting for the arrival of Ibrahim, the new pasha, took the road of Gaza, and hastened toward Constantinople. He chose rather to trust in the clemency of the grand signior, than to put himself in the power of his own successor, who might pursue rigorous and unjustifiable measures. Besides, he entertained a hope, that, by the power of bribes, and the influence of his patroness in the seraglio, he might obtain the forgiveness of Amurat, and be restored to his favour. When the fugitive pasha, however, arrived at Constantinople, he was cast into prison, and his riches were seized by the emperor; but Amurat having indulged his avarice, by denuding the culprit of his wealth, Hassan was more easily forgiven, and was soon restored to liberty and his friends.

The Egyptians had now indeed changed masters; but they reaped no benefit from the new governor. The riches and

resources of the country had excited his desire of wealth ; and he too oppressed the people. One end of his appointment to Egypt was to enjoy the means which that country afforded of acquiring wealth ; for he was destined to be the husband of Amurat's sister, and a suitable proportion of riches was considered as absolutely necessary for that exalted station. When he had answered the end of his mission, and had become exceedingly rich, as well as powerful, he was commanded to leave Grand Cairo and return to Constantinople.

A. D. 1588.—Mountainous countries have often been the refuge of the weak, and have afforded them strong holds and protection when more powerful nations have been assailed and overcome in open situations, and places free of access. In the mountainous district which runs from Smyrna to Palestine, various independant tribes had found an asylum from the miseries of those wars which had long desolated Syria and the sur-

founding nations. They increased in strength in those places of their retreat, and, having become numerous, they refused to obey a foreign lord. When Selim I subdued Syria and Egypt, he had higher objects in view than to spend a large portion of his time in pursuing those predatory tribes, who skulked among the mountains, and defied a regular attack. His successors on the Ottoman throne were likewise so constantly engaged in enterprises of vast moment, that, till Amurat III, none of them found leisure to invade the Druses, who dwelt about Mount Libanus, and were the most powerful of those people who inhabited the higher districts of that country.

But Ibrahim left Egypt, and passing through Palestine and Syria, by the way of Damascus, he approached the territories of the Druses with an army which nearly amounted to 20,000 horsemen. The Druses were at variance among themselves, and, in five divisions, or tribes,

yielded obedience to as many independent sheiks. The resistance which the Druses made to the Ottoman government was connected with a difference of sentiment in the tenets of religion. The opinions of this singular people are not indeed completely ascertained. Some have represented them as embracing sentiments which belong to the christian faith, but tinged and tainted with Jewish rites, while others have maintained, that they are degenerate Mohammedans, and sprung from the frantic sect which appeared in Egypt during the reign of the caliph Hakem Bamrillah. It is not improbable, that, in their peculiar circumstances, they might have imbibed and blended a variety of discordant sentiments, so that a definition of their opinions may be exceedingly difficult, and might require a more intimate knowledge of their views than the circumstances of historians have hitherto permitted. But whatever were their religious sentiments, or warlike feuds,

Ibrahim subdued the sheiks of that nation, and rendered them tributary to the grand signior. He then appeared at Constantinople, not only with great splendour, but high in fame, and was received at the court of Amurat with the liveliest demonstrations of joy.

During the reign of Mohammed III, who, in the year A. D. 1595, succeeded Amurat III, the affairs of Egypt were steadily managed by Murad, who was then pasha of Grand Cairo. His faithful services recommended him to the court of Constantinople, and when Ahmet I ascended the throne, the aged pasha of Egypt was commanded to appear in presence of the emperor. He was destined to be grand vizer, and lest, in those turbulent and deceitful times, he should have been apprehensive of a snare, he was presented with the keys of office as he drew nigh the Syrian frontier. The firmness of his character, combining with the severities of the Ottoman government, impressed his

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conduct with austerity, and the policy of his administration often degenerated into cunning and cruelty.^f

A. D. 1618.—The Janizaries, and other military corps of the Ottoman empire, had departed from the original laws of their establishment, and were neither so zealous, nor useful, in defending the state and promoting its glory. But when Othman II was raised to the dignity of grand signior, he resolved to correct the abuses which had crept into the army, and secretly expressed a desire to model anew the military establishment, and alter the government in some of its parts. To counteract the power of the army, and carry forward the schemes which he had in view, he secured a party of troops in Syria, and collected numerous bodies of soldiers at Grand Cairo. Though these proceedings were carried forward under disguise, yet the mask was not sufficient to con-

^f Mignot's Hist. vol. ii, p. 258, &c.

ceal, from the stated soldiers of the empire, the deep designs of the grand signior. He therefore became an object of suspicion and dislike, especially to the Janizaries, and after having spent a short and turbulent reign, which scarcely lasted four years, he was superseded in the government by Mustaph I, and next day was strangled by his enemies.*

A. D. 1644.—When Ibrahim I was grand signior, the Kislär aga, or chief captain of the seraglio, was banished from Constantinople, and, under pretence of making the pilgrimage to Mecca, he bent his course toward Egypt; or, as some assert, he retired into that province by the command of the emperor. But the departure of the Kislär aga, from the court of Constantinople, was not in the secrecy of disgrace, for it was in all the pomp and splendour which the circumstances of the case

* Mignot, vol. ii, p. 327, &c.

were calculated to furnish. He had a favourite slave, of exquisite comeliness and beauty, who became the mother of an engaging child. It is to be supposed, that the aga of the seraglio had not suffered that cruel degradation which has long distinguished the effeminate officers who wait about the women's apartments in the seraglio of Constantinople; for he doated upon the mother, and was peculiarly fond of the son.

Ibrahim I was so much enamoured of the lady, that the attendants at court viewed her as destined to be one of the seraglio. But the reigning grand signior was a weak prince, devoted entirely to pleasure; and the ladies of the seraglio, being jealous of the Kislär aga's favourite female, devised means to have her removed from court. It was the effect of this deep-laid design which drove from Constantinople the aga, his slave, and her son. They went on-board one of the ships which had conveyed to the grand signior the valuable tribute

of Egypt ; and, by the kindness of Ibrahim, they were loaded with rich presents, and dismissed with costly accommodations. The ladies of the seraglio encouraged the profusion, that the party might be fascinated with the splendour, and that fewer arts might be tried to procure a reversal of the banishment. The weather was unfavourable, but the sailing of the vessels was anxiously promoted ; so that repentance, or the violence of returning affection, might not awaken the sultan's tenderness, and overthrow the scheme. The storm, however, blew, and the vessels took shelter in Rhodes ; but the knights of Malta, whose gallies were terrible in the Mediterranean sea, had heard of the rich ships, and lay in wait to meet and overcome them. The vessels encountered each other, and the conflict was dreadful ; but the knights were triumphant, and the Kışlar aga was found among the slain.

Having suffered considerably in their vessels and crew, the knights refitted them in a harbour of Candia, and steered their course for Malta. The joy which they felt in this success, and valuable capture, was considerably increased by the flattering idea, that they had gotten into their power a son and favourite lady of the Ottoman emperor. But the deception was soon unveiled; the supposed son of Ibrahim was neglected; and, having entered into the monastic state, he was afterwards known at Rome by the name of Father Ottoman. The grand signior vowed revenge upon the knights of Malta, and threatened an attack upon the island of Candia. The Venetians, to whom it belonged, pled, in apology, that the harbours of Candia were unfortified, and therefore the knights of Malta could not have been prevented from entering them, although it had been with an intention hostile to Venice itself. But the storm gathered against Candia, and

in the year A. D. 1645 a fleet sailed to subdue the island. The fate of this attempt was long doubtful; and, oftener than once, the Ottoman power was in danger of being repulsed; but after an astonishing struggle, of twenty-four years, Candia surrendered to the fleets and armies of Constantinople.

A. D. 1650.—Kiuperli was now raised to the dignity of grand vizer; and, though eighty years of age, he was vigorous in body and active in mind. He had spent his life till that advanced period in the service of his country; and, having passed through the different degrees of military appointments, he was habituated to order and rigorous duty. The enfeebled reign of Mohammed IV, during which he was called to the office of grand vizer, stood much in need of all the vigour and correctness of Kiuperli's character. But the indignant veteran, spurning and enraged at the relaxed and turbulent state of the empire,

sometimes stretched too far the restraining and correcting hand of his power.

Many of the provinces appear to have been dangerously infected with disloyal principles, and Asia Minor gave unequivocal tokens of disorder and insubordination. The brother-in-law of the pasha commanded an army belonging to that country ; and having given offence to the grand vizer, Kiuperli commanded him to be seized, and then put to death. Ibrahim Pasha, who governed at Aleppo, was enraged at this violent proceeding ; and, having previously been disaffected to the government of Constantinople, he devised a plan for overthrowing Mohammed, and destroying the grand vizer.

When a new emperor ascended the Ottoman throne, the destruction which generally waited the young princes of the blood frequently induced them to retire into secrecy, and, by the assistance of their friends, they were sometimes successfully concealed. Seizing

upon the acknowledged prevalence of those contingent events, Ibrahim pretended, that under his protection there was a son of Amurat IV, who, upon the death of his father, should have succeeded to the throne, but fled from danger, and was concealed by his mother.

The young pretender, who was son of a potter in the town of Rica, having been taught to read and write, was now treated as a prince; the royal standard was raised; and he was proclaimed grand signior, by the name of Bajazet. The movements and preparations of Ibrahim had raised a considerable sensation at Constantinople; and the pasha of Aleppo was commanded to return to duty and obedience. Having despised the mandate, the respective armies soon appeared in the field; and that of Ibrahim having been defeated, he did not lead his troops again to the charge, but fleeing with them by the way of the desert, he passed through Egypt till he reached Alexandria. There, perhaps,

he expected to meet with assistance; for Egypt was a powerful, and at that time a discontented province: but Kiuperli, with a numerous army, followed his steps with a rapidity of pursuit, and pitched his camp in the neighbourhood of Alexandria. Ibrahim was offered encouraging terms of accommodation, and invited to a conversation with Kiuperli without the walls of the city. The rebel pasha complied with the invitation, and each of them was only attended by a few guards. But the interview was a scheme of deceit, and Ibrahim was surrounded by 200 horse, which sprung unexpectedly from the place of their concealment.

The pasha fell in the act of resistance, and his attendants, who survived, were cast into chains. A manifesto was sent into the city of Alexandria, which proclaimed pardon to the people upon a return to obedience; and, having produced proofs of Ibrahim's imposture, the gates were opened, and an end was

immediately put to the ill-directed, but deep laid scheme of rebellion.

A. D. 1703.—When Achmet III. was raised to the Ottoman throne, he saw the empire in confusion, and, being surrounded by conspirators, was exposed to danger by the turbulent spirit of the people. Hassan, the Selictar aga, or sword-bearer, having acquired the confidence of the sultan, was married to his sister, and soon elevated to the office of grand vizer. The proscriptions of men in power were frequent and numerous; dark was the day of vengeance, and the whole nation was filled with horror. But Hassan, who promoted those severities, was stopped in his career of violence and blood. The princess Ayesa, to whom he was married, felt an attachment to her husband's Caya, or lieutenant, and the youth was secretly admitted into the women's apartments. Hassan, the grand vizer, was justly indignant, and loud in remonstrance; but he had not the power to

chastise Ayesa, the sister and favourite of the grand signior. She spurned at his boldness in presuming to blame her conduct, or call in question her prudence. She laid her complaints at the foot of the throne ; and if Hassan had only been grand vizer, if no connection had subsisted between him and the royal house, the bow-string would have been his portion, and death would have atoned for his presumption. But, being the husband of Achmet's sister, his life was spared, yet he was sent in honourable exile into the province of Egypt.*

Such has been represented the various fortune of the ambitious Hassan, while it has otherwise been maintained, that Ayesa was the fondest and most dutiful of wives. Her interest and affection raised her husband to the highest office in the Ottoman court ; and when he went as governor to Nicomedia, though it had never been known that the grand

* Mignot, Achmet III, vol. iv, p. 96, &c.

signior's sister, or daughter, was permitted to go, even with their husbands, to the distance of half a mile beyond the precincts of Constantinople, yet she attended Hassan to the place of his destination, and lived with him in peace and harmony. It is further asserted, that his removal from the office of grand vizier was to appease the clamours of the people; that he was constituted pasha of Egypt, as a mark of the sultan's respect; that he was afterwards appointed beylerbey of Tripoli in Syria; and that he died in the full possession of Achmet's favour.^b

A. D. 1726.—Peter the Great of Russia died, and the empress was so much engaged in securing to herself the possession of the throne, that she neglected to fulfil the articles of the treaty, which, by the mediation of France, had lately been concluded between the court of St. Petersburg and that of Constantinople.

^b Cant. Achmed III, p. 440, in the notes.

ople. Encouraged by the state of the Russian empire, the Ottomans again displayed their natural desire of conquest, and turned their arms once more toward Persia. There they were opposed by the powerful Ashraf, who had usurped the throne of that kingdom. This prince attempted to avert the designs of the Ottoman court; and, by many professions of regard to the faith of Mohammed, he raised prejudices in his favour, even among the troops of Achmet. A battle ensued between the two armies, and the Ottoman general was vanquished. Ashraf was really desirous of peace, because it was most suitable to the new and untried tenure by which he held his crown. By a wise exercise of moderation, and a judicious manifestation of respect to his Mussleman brethren, he released the prisoners, and restored the baggage of the humbled Turks.

This conduct of Ashraf increased his friends in the armies of Constantinople,

and many deserted to his standard. Conciliating means were adopted by the grand signior ; but these pacific measures were chiefly pursued on account of the convulsed and discontented state of the Ottoman empire. Egypt, in particular, was in open rebellion ; and the beys of that country had expelled from Grand Cairo the pasha of Constantinople. Ibrahim, the grand vizer of Achmet, sent to Egypt a new pasha, and, by pursuing lenient measures, the bey, who had headed the rebellion, was allured to Constantinople ; and, by one of those deceitful practices which weak and tyrannical governments frequently adopt, the unsuspecting, but ambitious bey was secretly put to death.^b

The vast projects of ambition which for a long series of years occupied the Ottoman court, decidedly prevented them from attending sufficiently to the province of Egypt. During that season

^b Mign. vol. iv, Achmet III, p. 288, &c.

of neglect, the divan of Grand Cairo, and various officers, whose nomination did not depend upon the will of the grand signior, assiduously extended their influence, and increased their strength. The pasha at first was constituted with great and numerous powers; and the sheik Al Belled, who was proposed by the divan, was approved or rejected by the grand signior's lieutenant at Grand Cairo. The sheik al belled, who was the representative of the divan, or popular part of the constitution, had a right to complain to the Ottoman court when the pasha of Egypt violated the rights of the community; but to remove him from his office appears to have been an usurped authority, which the encroaching lords of Egypt cunningly claimed and seized, in the weak and inconsiderate state of the Ottoman government.^c

^c Though the power of suspension is inserted among the grants which the author of the Revolt of Ali Bey

In the exercise of this power of dismissing the pasha, the Egyptian divan became arrogant and tyrannical. His arrival at Alexandria was strictly watched, by spies from Grand Cairo; and if his views and orders were communicated to any of his numerous attendants, it was scarcely possible to conceal them from the cunning and assiduous agents of the Egyptian divan. If any thing were detected, which was not suitable to their views, the pasha was prohibited from approaching Grand Cairo; and intimation given at Constantinople, that another viceroy must be appointed. If nothing unfavourable was discovered in the instructions or designs of the pasha, he was received with demonstrations of joy, and the highest professions of re-

ascribes to Selim, yet he does not profess to speak from accurate information; and, in the confusion and frauds of turbulent times, things may be ranked among the acts of Selim which were done at a future time. Revolt of Ali Bey, second edition, 8vo, London, A. D. 1784, p. 32, &c.

spect. He was then entrusted with the keys of the castle ; and having presented the sheik al Belled with a costly pelias, he also conferred upon the beys castans, or robes of honour.

Now when the pasha displeases the divan, they send a messenger in black, who enters the apartment of the first minister of the province, without ceremony, and, though he has a written order, deigns not to shew it, but, as it were by accident, half exposed to view in his bosom. Without uttering a word, but one in Arabic, which commands the pasha to descend, he turns the carpet, which, in the manner of the east, the viceroy has for his seat ; and, without delay, the pasha retires to Bulek, and waits there for the orders of the Porte ; and, in the meantime, another governor is submissively chosen, and sent to Grand Cairo. Sometimes, indeed, the pasha has such influence among the beys and great officers of state as to defy cabals. It was thus that Rahip Moham-

med reigned in Egypt, from A. D. 1742 till A. D. 1749. But in obeying some severe orders from the court of Constantinople, he became unpopular, and was dismissed.^b

By the original stipulations for settling the government of Egypt, an annual tribute of corn and money was to be sent to Constantinople, for the support of the state; and to Mecca, for maintaining, in its true dignity, the religion of Mohammed. Moreover, in time of war, Egypt was to raise and pay a body of 12,000 troops, for the protection and assistance of the grand signior. But the tribute of Constantinople was, in the process of time, frequently withheld, or nominally paid; and the stipulated troops were sometimes employed in direct opposition to the Ottoman authority.

The commanders of the Arabs and

^b Revolt of Ali Bey, p. 29, 30, 31, 33, &c.

Janizaries, and the other three military corps, constituted, at first, the principal members of the Egyptian divan; but wishing to acquire personal property, and individual influence, they sacrificed their well ascertained power for visionary schemes of possessions and aggrandizement. The beys, who superintended the various departments of the country, had hitherto been viewed as dependent inferiors; but in seeking the means of acquiring possessions, the members of the divan were induced to court the favour of the beys, who levied the tribute, and had it in their power to demand it with rigour, or modify its extent.

The seven heads of the military corps enjoyed high authority in the state, and were supported with dignity, by appointment of the constitution; but wishing to possess private property, they pursued that object with avidity, and obtained it at the expence of their independence and power.

By these proceedings, the beys acquired increasing influence, and extravagant authority. As they rose in strength, the members of the divan became weak and subservient. The beys had formerly chosen their own Cashefs, or deputy governors; and, in their respective departments, had a considerable and almost uncontrouled authority. Though their office was merely of a civil nature, yet each of them had a few Mamlukes at his command; but they were solely for the purpose of enforcing his authority, in collecting the tribute and regulating the affairs of his department. But in the progress of their power, the beys purchased slaves from Circassia, Georgia, and Mingrelia; and in proportion to the numbers which they acquired, so was their strength. Under the cherishing hand of the beys, their favourite Mamlukes rose to different offices of importance; and they too having purchased slaves, added their strength to that of their patron. Thus

the power and influence of a bey were in direct proportion to the Mamlukes which he himself commanded, and to the slaves which his dependants possessed.

The subordinate officers who were appointed by the beys, remained in the interest of their masters, not only from the powerful and amiable principle of gratitude, but also from the hope of being raised at length, by their influence, to the honour and dignity of beys. When the road to power was thus open, a competition ensued for increasing the number of military dependants; and as the divan of Grand Cairo became totally subservient to the views and power of the beys, so the chief who had the greatest number of followers was able to procure, for his favourite dependant, the appointment to the rank and situation of bey, when such an office became vacant. The continuance of the Ottoman power, and the influence of the pasha, depended altogether upon the

want of harmony among the beys themselves. For the Janizaries, and the other military corps, gradually lost their vigour, and, in the process of changes, were reduced to mere nominal forces ; while the Mamlukes acquired continual importance, till they were constituted the only efficient soldiers in the province of Egypt.

If the most powerful beys frequently directed the conduct of the divan, though other leaders strenuously opposed their success, what would have been their combined force if no discord had divided their power ? According to the number of favourites which any fortunate lord had raised to the dignity of bey, so had he an accumulated strength and number of votes, for obtaining future appointments to the successive vacancies which happened among them. The pasha of the divan often found it expedient to support the interest of the most powerful bey, lest the influence of so great a chief might procure his dis-

missal from the government of Egypt. But he occasionally pursued an opposite course, and supported the pretensions of the weaker beys, that a portion of strength might thereby be subtracted from the more powerful leaders. Thus, by managing, and artfully counteracting the influence and authority of the beys, a remnant of power was preserved by the Ottomans, amid the usurpations and successful efforts of those ambitious chiefs.

The Mamlukes are kept up or increased by slaves, who are annually imported, and sold in Egypt. Many of them marry, but few of them comparatively have a family of children. This general deficiency is partly ascribed to their dissipated conduct, and the unnatural crimes of which they are guilty; but is also supposed to be owing, in some degree, to the connections which they commonly form with those female slaves who are brought from the same country as themselves. It has been suggested,

that as plants of one climate do not thrive in another, which is very different in temperature and seasons, unless they be managed and trained in a peculiar manner; so it has been imagined, that the Mamlukes, who are chiefly natives of colder regions, would be more certain of possessing children of their own, provided they would deign to intermarry with Egyptian women.^f

The Mamlukes, indeed, are sometimes blessed with offspring by their wives; but they seem to be plants of a degenerating race; for we are confidently told, that they seldom continue beyond the first, and scarcely, if ever, beyond the second generation. It is certainly an astonishing truth, that the progeny of the Mamlukes is not numerous, and does not increase the population of Egypt, but decays in succession, and

^f Slaves, from the interior of Africa, are occasionally made Mamlukes; but it is rare to find in that body any which belong to European nations.

doth not perpetuate the race. The treatment which the children of the beys receive is as singular as their existence is rare, and their duration of short continuance. They do not succeed to their father's property, but the casheph is his master's heir; and, as in the bey's absence he acted through the whole department with the full authority of a governor, so, when the bey dies, he enjoys his household, and manages the affairs of that part of the community, till a new bey is chosen.

The children, however, and their mothers, are taken under the guardianship of the divan, and provided with suitable means of support. It is a peculiar circumstance in the history of the Mamlukes, that, excepting in a few unimportant instances, while the Baharite and Borgite dynasties prevailed in Egypt, the son never succeeded the father in the office of sultan, or bey; and we only know one recent exception; when, A. D.

1796, Murzuke, son of Murad, was constituted a bey.^p This practice is inconsistent with the feelings of nature, and the general conduct of civilized nations. It resembles the proceedings of rude tribes, where age or personal courage sometimes procures the royal seat, or it is somewhat analogous to the irregular conduct of a military government, which capriciously appoints sovereigns, and as whimsically dethrones them; but it is totally abhorrent from parental affection, sound policy, and the general sentiments of the world. To account satisfactorily for so long a series of uncommon and unnatural proceedings, would lead us into a field of extensive and dark inquiry, when we should be more apt to wander from the truth than to find a path which would conduct us to the source of the difficulty, and the solution of the mystery.

^p Browne, ch. ii.

The military nature of the Baharite and Borgite dynasties may imperfectly assist us to discover the origin of this uncommon practice among those strange and peculiar people. The office of bey, in the present constitution of Egypt, being purely elective, it is not to be supposed that the remaining beys would uniformly raise, to the government of the vacant department, the son who was born in the family of the deceased. But why, it may be asked, does the son of a bey scarcely, in any instance, succeed his father in the government? Why does it approach to a standing rule, that he shall be excluded from the office of bey; and why is he not the heir of his father's property? Having their own interest to promote, the most powerful lords are anxious, as we have seen, to elevate their dependants, and thereby to increase their own power. In conformity to this idea, an ambitious bey would expect more implicit obedience from one of his own enfranchised slaves and house-

held than from the son of a proud lord, whom he might assist to ascend the chair of authority. In the rapacious and unsettled state of Egypt which continued to prevail under the Ottoman government, the cashaphs of the beys having acquired, in general, considerable power, would naturally seize upon, and retain the goods and pecuniary possessions of their departed masters, as there was no authority in the department to oppose their avarice and injustice.

Thus passing over the son of a bey in appointing a new sanjak, or governor, which at first might have proceeded from an idea of expediency, might be afterwards observed as a law of consuetude, and depriving the children of the beys of their patrimonial rights, though founded on injustice and oppression, might gradually be considered as an established rule. But though the children of the beys do not succeed their fathers in either their property or honours, yet they are

viewed in the light of citizens, and may be appointed to any office in the state.*

In this situation of public affairs, the beys seized every office of importance in the province of Egypt, with the exception of that of viceroy, which is uniformly filled by the appointment of the grand signior. But if they could not usurp the office of pasha, they grasped his privileges, and annihilated his power. We have found, in the course of investigation, that the beys encroached so much upon the authority of the viceroy that they dismissed him at pleasure; and then so little was his office regarded, that whereas the meetings of the divan were formerly held in the castle where the pasha resided, we find, in the period at which we have now arrived, that they were held in the house of the most powerful bey. But the remains of courtesy, and the

* Revolt of Ali Bey, p. 39, &c.; Volney, tom. 1, ch. 7; and Browne, ch. 5.

forms of obedience, induced them still to wait upon the viceroy, when a firman, or mandate, of the grand signior was to be read and made known.

About this time Ibrahim, a caya of the Janizaries, acquired great importance in the house of his master, who was a bey and the Janizary aga. Ibrahim was alert, as well as ambitious, and taking advantage of the liberty which was granted to certain officers, as well as beys, to purchase slaves, and have Mamlukes in his train, he increased his followers to a number which was uncommonly great. Of course he was raised to the dignity of bey; and, A. D. 1750, he was appointed to the office of sheik al belled. About the year A. D. 1741, an active and well-formed youth was brought from the neighbourhood of Mount Caucasus, and sold to the powerful Ibrahim. We shall not enter into the controversy, whether his father and some of his kindred visited him in Egypt in the time of his prosperity; for, though

the circumstance is certainly possible, yet surely it is of little moment in our present inquiries. Like the other Mamlukes, this young slave of Ibrahim became a Mussleman, and he received the name of Ali.

The agility and active spirit of this promising youth commanded the notice of his master, and of more than 2,000 slaves, whom Ibrahim possessed, the docile and active Ali was the greatest favourite. When he arrived at the age of twenty-eight years, he was presented with his freedom, and, in token of liberty, his beard was permitted to grow. Having passed through various offices, with the approbation of his master, Ibrahim, in the face of many difficulties, promoted him to the rank of a bey. In the year 1757, Ibrahim, the protector and patron of Ali, died, and the Mamlukes of his house resolved to retain and divide among themselves the possessions and power of their departed master. Rodoan Caya, who had been the friend.

and companion of Ibrahim, aspired to the chief authority among the beys, but was expelled and put to death. In that unsettled state of the country, various and rapid changes ensued, till, A.D. 1763, Ali Bey rose to the office of sheik al Belled, and thus obtained the chief command in the state.^b

When Ali rose to this dignified rank, Abud al Rahman was the reigning bey at Grand Cairo ; but while he attended the pilgrims' caravan to Mecca, in the character of Emir al Hage, the enterprising Ali found means to have him excluded from his power and station. Ibrahim Bey the Circassian, impelled by a principle of hatred, had cut off Ibrahim Bey the Georgian, who was the friend and patron of Ali. This young and resolute bey, now in the high possession of power, fulfilled a vow of revenge, which, for the space of several

^b Rev. of Ali Bey, p. 69, &c; Volney, tom. ii, ch. 7, 8; and Browne, ch. 5.

years, had stood recorded in his mind. But the death of this Circassian raised such a ferment in the province of Egypt, that Ali was obliged to flee and seek an asylum in the city of Jerusalem. Complaints of this deed were carried to Constantinople, and orders were given to have the head of Ali sent to the grand signior.

From this scene of danger, the fugitive bey found refuge in S^t. John d'Acre, and there he formed a friendship with the sheik Daher, which led, in the issue, to important effects. By the zeal and influence of those in Egypt, who were attached to Ali, he was restored to the favour of the Ottoman court, and permitted to return to Grand Cairo. But, in A. D. 1765, the strength of his enemies having been revived, he found it expedient to retire again into Palestine. Next year, however, he returned into Egypt, and having put to death four beys who had been hostile to his power,

he resumed, in peace, the office and influence of sheik al Belled.*

A. D. 1768.—At this time the grand signior proclaimed war against the Russians, and thus, while the agitated state of Egypt stood in need of the correcting hand of power, the attention of Constantinople was completely engaged by the affairs and designs of the North. Ali, in the capacity of sheik al Belled, gave orders to raise the 12,000 soldiers which, in time of war, the Porte had a right to demand from the province of Egypt; but it was justly suspected that he intended to employ those troops in the support and enlargement of his own power. Standing firmer than formerly upon the station on which he was placed, he saw his enemies considerably reduced, and he raised his views to independent authority. But the enemies of Ali, though diminished in numbers, and lurk-

* Rev. of Ali Bey, p. 76, &c.; et Volney, tom. i, ch. 8.

ing in private, were nevertheless determined in their enmity, and suggested at Constantinople, that the sheik al Belled was planning a deep and extensive rebellion. It deserves to be remarked, that those informations did not proceed from duty, nor principles of loyalty to the grand signior, for there was not a bey or Mamluke in Egypt who did not spurn at the Ottoman power, and who was not ready to draw the sabre in the cause of freedom ; but such communications were intended to obstruct the views of Ali, and overthrow his power.

It was easy to conjecture what effect this notice would have in the councils of Constantinople, and Ali was prepared to avert the vengeance. Expecting a capigi, or Turkish state-messenger of death, he dispatched a trusty bey, with a suitable number of attendants, to watch the landing of the Ottoman officer, and prevent the effects of the fatal bow-string. Between Grand Cairo and Alexandria the expected messenger, with his

attendants, was met by the agents of Ali, and immediately seized. On examining their papers and instructions, the mandate of death was found, and the order bore, that Ali, with his friends, was to be secretly destroyed. The capigi and his followers were instantly put to death, and the designs of Constantinople were unequivocally explained in a full meeting of the divan at Grand Cairo. The account was heard with horror, and a murmur of disapprobation pervaded the assembly. Such as were unfriendly to Ali, and had been concerned in exciting the jealousy of the grand signior, were comparatively few, and not daring even to mutter a dissent, the opinion of the divan was harmonious, and the banners of independence were unfurled. The pasha was driven from Egypt, and nothing was heard of but freedom and conquest. But the heroes of the approaching contest, who vowed to throw off the Ottoman yoke, were not the people of Egypt, but the

beys, who had been born in another country; and if they sought for glory, it was the false and diminished lustre of personal power and individual aggrandizement. From such a prospect, nothing valuable could be expected; and, even if the scheme were prosperous, the natives of Egypt must still be slaves.^a

The situation of the whole Ottoman empire was at this time precarious and eventful. Wheresoever Ali directed his views he was presented with circumstances which encouraged a revolt. For almost thirty years the grand signior had been at peace, and during that period of external quietness, the sinews of his arm had been enervated, and the soldiers of the state had sunk into sloth, and lost their terror. The distant provinces were desirous of recovering their independence, and in many of the nations rebellion was assuming an alarming form. Egypt was in arms, Persia

^a Revolt of Ali Bey, p. 98, &c.; and Volney, ch. 8.

was in a state of insubordination, the pastoral tribes of Syria and Asia Minor were unwilling subjects of the grand signior, and the empire of Russia, under the direction of Catherine II, had acquired that degree of power and influence which, for several years, had alarmed the court of Constantinople.

Of late the danger had been evidently increasing, and the grand signior now resolved to resist the progress and repel the evil. In the month of October 1768, the court of Constantinople proclaimed war against the empress of Russia, and, in each of the hostile nations, the preparations for war were active and unceasing. From the time of Mohammed IV, the vigour of the Ottoman empire had been gradually declining; and we have already observed, that, for some time past, the state had been weak and discontented; but a new impulse seems to have been given to the fountain of power, and the grand signior himself set an example of activity and resolu-

tion. The great object which Russia had long in view, was to secure and establish, for herself, the liberty of trading in the Black sea, and of sailing through the Dardanelles, on their way to the Archipelago and Mediterranean. That scheme had hitherto been frustrated by the successful exertions of the Turks; but the empress was now resolved to complete her scheme. She conducted her ships down the Baltic, past through the German ocean, swept the coasts of France, Portugal, and Spain, directed her course up the Mediterranean, and, after many difficulties, rode triumphant in the Archipelago, and struck terror into the court of Constantinople.*

A. D. 1770.—In the meantime, Ali Bey employed a part of his forces to correct some irregularities, and subdue some enemies in Upper Egypt, while he himself was engaged at home in prepar-

* Annual Register, vol. xi, p. 31; vol. xii, p. 2, &c.; vol. xiii, p. 27, &c.

ing measures for securing internal prosperity, and rendering the arms of Egypt respected abroad. In pursuance of these schemes, he appointed Mohammed Bey to conquer Arabia Felix, and furnished Ishmael, or Hassan Bey, with a fleet of ships, at Suez, to seize upon the port of Iidda, and other places of importance on that coast. Amidst all his projects of ambition, he was not unmindful of trade and commerce. He knew well how much those measures were calculated to gain him the affections of the people, and how much the resources of trade were fitted to supply the treasury, and afford him the means of supporting a great and effective army.

A. D. 1771.—Having been successful in those expeditions, Ali Bey sought the alliance of Russia, and sent an army to conquer Syria. The circumstances of that country invited his approach, and promised him success. Daher, who was a chief of the Beduin Arabs, that frequented the banks of the Jordan, had

considerably increased his power ; and, being engaged in traffic, like many of his race, he was desirous of obtaining a port upon the shore of the Mediterranean sea. S'. John d'Acre was a convenient situation, and was but slightly protected by an aga of Constantinople, and a few Janizaries under his command. It was an easy prey to the sheik Daher, and as the Ottoman government were unable to expel him, they appeared cheerfully to grant a possession which they could not withhold. Daher, having established himself in Acre, began to extend his influence among the neighbouring Arabs, and to form connections with the Motualis, the Druses, and other pastoral tribes upon the north. In the progress of his aggrandizement, he was not contented with the eminence which he had already reached, but demanded an hereditary right to his new government, with the title of sheik of S'. John d'Acre, and many other pompous as well as vain-glorious names.

The same imbecility which has already been remarked in the Ottoman court, aided by bribes among the members of the divan, procured for the ambitious Daher the investiture and titles which he desired. But as cunning and weakness are often concomitants in a degraded state, so the court of Constantinople determined to oppose by artifice, and overthrow by stratagem, the dangerous power of the sheik Daher. The arms of Constantinople were too much employed in the war with Russia to suffer an army to be sent into Syria; but when artifice could not overwhelm Daher, Osman was constituted pasha of Damascus, and invested with extraordinary powers, that he might oppose and subdue the sheik of Acre.

About the beginning of this year, (1771), Ali Bey collected a numerous army, for the purpose of overthrowing the Turkish power in Palestine and Syria. It moved in a body over the isthmus of Suez, and the numbers amount-

ed to 60,000 men ; but the effective soldiers did not exceed 40,000. In the luxurious and imperfectly trained armies of the east, there is uniformly a large proportion of useless attendants, and agents of dissipation. As the troops of Ali approached Gaza, the Turkish garrisons were alarmed, but refused to surrender, and dispatched messengers to solicit assistance from the pasha of Damascus.

Osman was instantly in arms, and put in motion a considerable body of troops ; for he both sought the glory of victory, and, by the terms of his appointment to the pashalik of Damascus, he was bound to defend with vigour the Ottoman possessions. But in the meantime Gaza yielded to the Mamlukes, and the sheik Daher opposed the progress, and thwarted the designs of Osman Pasha.

The army of Ali Bey having secured Gaza, took, in succession, the town of Ramla, and Shechem, the ancient ca-

pital of Samaria, but afterwards denominated Neapolis, and now distinguished by the name of Naplûs. Thence the troops of Ali Bey marched to Jerusalem, where they were met without the gates by the Mollah of the Mohammedans, the chief of the christian priests, and other deputies of considerable rank. They brought in their hands valuable presents, and professed a desire to receive, as their protectors, the beys and Mamlukes of Egypt. But Jerusalem being then a dependency on Damascus, or Sham, as it is denominated by the Turks, the inhabitants prevailed upon Mohammed Bey, who was general of the Egyptian forces, to direct his troops against Osman Pasha, and if he were subdued, they promised to yield an easy and willing obedience.

Having arrived at Acre, the Egyptian army formed a junction with the troops of sheik Daher, and, after the necessary arrangements were made, they began their united march, and in a short

time opened the siege of Damascus. The pashas of Sidon, or Said, of Tripoli, and Aleppo, had joined their forces with those of Osman, and they stood in an attitude of proud defiance. Trusting to their strength, they marched out of the city, and in dreadful conflict joined the Egyptian army. But the Turkish soldiers were not able to withstand the impetuous valour of the Mamlukes, nor the intrepid movements of Daher's troops. And the pashas themselves having fled from the field, their troops were routed, and many of them were slain. Osman, with his associates, hastened to Aleppo, and Mohammed Bey entered Damascus. The castle did not immediately surrender, but the fortifications were in ruins, and there was not a single cannon to defend the town. Yet so little were the Egyptians skilled in tactics, that this desolate fortress, with a small garrison, and a few muskets, de-

fied, for several days, the numerous army of Ali Bey.^a

Scarcely had the triumphant Mohammed Bey continued in Damascus forty days, when he sounded a retreat, and directed his march towards Egypt. To abandon so important a conquest, and not deign to assign even a shadow of a reason for his conduct, astonished the army, and filled with amazement and regret the sheik of S^t. John d'Acre. This unwarrantable proceeding has been ascribed to the intrigues of Osman Pasha, who, being incapable of resisting the arms of Egypt, had found means to excite jealousy in the breast of Mohammed, and to persuade him, that Ali was attempting to establish his own power at the expence of Mohammed and the other beys. Such suggestions might be communicated, and such insinuations

^a Rev. of Ali Bey, p. 104, &c.; Volney, ch. 8; and Ann. Register, vol. xiv, p. 80.

might have their effect; but the cause of this inexplicable measure appears to have been deep in designs of ambition.

He hastened to Grand Cairo, or, as others say, penetrated into Upper Egypt; and, having lost many of his army by death and desertion, he there recruited his forces, and then, returning to Grand Cairo, he pitched his camp on the opposite side of the river. The revolutionary state of Egypt, and the fickleness of temper which that situation of society promotes, induced many of the people to abandon Ali, and join the rebel bey. Finding himself possessed of sufficient strength, Mohammed gave battle to the troops of Ali, and compelled him to seek refuge in the castle of Grand Cairo.*

The danger to which Ali Bey was thus exposed, induced him, and his diminished adherents, to flee toward Gaza;

* Rev. of Ali Bey, p. 108, &c.; and Volacy, tom. 1, ch. 8.

but, finding that town in possession of the enemy, he continued his course into Palestine. Upon the 23^d of April 1772, he arrived in the neighbourhood of Acre, and encamped under mount Carmel, upon the plains of Caiffa, which was formerly called Ecbatana. Thus we find the once powerful, but now unfortunate, Ali Bey driven from the scenes of success and ambition, to seek protection, and a revival of his fortunes, by the assistance of Daher. The alliance of this sheik he had formerly procured in the season of prosperity; and the friendship of the magnanimous chief was not withheld in the time of adversity. Fatigue, disappointment, and anxiety, so affected his mind, and agitated his body, that scarcely was the army encamped, when he was seized by a violent and dangerous fever. He received every assistance from the physician and kind attentions of his friend Daher; but he refused to reside in the palace of his protector, or accept every favour which the sheik would have bestowed. In the

meantime a division of Ali Bey's troops; in connection with the army of the sheik Daher, marched to Sidon, which was occupied by the forces of Constantinople. Upon the 27th of June 1772, the armies engaged in battle, and more than 4,000 of the Turkish forces were slain. Hassan, the pasha of Sidon, fled from the field of danger, and Tantavi Bey, the general of Ali, with the loss of little more than 200 men, took quiet possession of the town.^f

By this time Ali Bey was restored to health, and had recovered his former degree of strength and spirits. The town of Joppa; or Jaffa, was taken possession of in Ali's name, while his armies, under Mohammed Bey, were triumphant in Syria; but, when the forces of Egypt were removed, the people of Jaffa withdrew their allegiance from Ali Bey, and

^f Volney speaks of Ali Bey as having been present at Sidon, but the author of the *Revolt of Ali Bey*, who was in his suite, states the circumstances as I have done.

seized upon the clothing, ammunition, and provisions, which had been conveyed thither for the use of the Egyptian army. Mustapha; the governor of the town, was summoned to surrender, but having provided for an attack, which he had long expected, he sent an answer of defiance, and prepared for a vigorous defence. The town, indeed, was only surrounded by a wall, which might rather be considered as a fence for a garden than as a protection for a besieged city. It had neither ditch nor ramparts, but to an army little skilled in the knowledge of artillery, it formed a considerable and perplexing obstacle. The united troops of Daher and Ali Bey were placed in divisions at a convenient distance, without the walls of the town; but the few ships which they possessed not being able completely to block up the port, occasional supplies were thrown into the town.

The correspondence which Ali Bey had opened with Count Alexis Orlov,

the commander in chief of the Russian forces in the Archipelago, had hitherto been productive of no effectual co-operation; but occasional vessels from the Russian fleet had reached the coast of Syria; and, on other occasions, as well as at the siege of Jaffa, they lent a transient aid to the troops of Daher and Ali Bey. Upon the 17th of December, a Russian transport, under British colours, and commanded by Captain Brown, appeared off Jaffa, protecting the return of a confidential messenger of Ali Bey, who had been sent with important proposals to the Russian commander.

On-board this vessel were several officers who belonged to the empress of Russia, and though not sent on purpose to give aid to Daher and the Egyptian Bey, yet, seeing how ill-conducted were the few pieces of artillery which those chiefs possessed, and knowing that their assistance would not give offence to the court of St. Petersburg, they took the direction of some batteries, and Captain

Clinglinoff was unfortunately killed at his post.^b

A. D. 1773.—Upon the 31st of January, after a destructive but ill-conducted siege of six months, the town of Jaffa surrendered, and, upon the following day, it was entered, and taken possession of by the sheik Daher and Ali Bey.

The whole of these conquests in Syria were made in the name, and apparently for the aggrandizement of Ali Bey; but we are not to suppose that the ambitious and powerful sheik Daher had no other object in view than a friendly indulgence to the desires and interest of the aspiring Ali. The efforts of the Egyptian chief to overthrow the Ottoman power in Syria were of great importance to the designs and situation of Daher. He saw the danger of being unsupported before the fierce wrath of

^b Revolt of Ali Bey, p. 113, &c.; Volney, tom. i, ch. 8; and Ann. Reg. vol. xv p. 18, &c.

the offended Turks. He had openly defied their power, and he knew how necessary it was to be well supported in resisting their arms. But if his own authority were well established, and the dread of Constantinople taken away, it was to be presumed, that he would view Ali Bey as an intruder, and devise means to have him expelled from Syria.

But if no such jealousy or consequences should ensue, yet what were the possessions of Syria to the vast ideas of Ali Bey? They could at most have been but the limited territories of an independent sheik, and could not have been compared to the extensive range of ambition which his eye had taken. Egypt was therefore the uninterrupted object of his wish; and, ever since the day that he was expelled from its boundaries, it had been the ultimate end of every course he had pursued, to be enabled to return, and to return in triumph to Grand Cairo. Letters and messages had been received from the

capital of Egypt, by which he was assured, that the tyranny and extortion of Mohammed Bey had prepared the people for a revolt ; and that if Ali would return, the gates of Cairo would be thrown open to receive him. These assurances might be true, and yet the attempt might be difficult and hazardous ; for the reigning bey was powerful among the Mamlukes, and the constituted authorities were the creatures of his will. But the hopes of Ali Bey were thus raised to a pitch of high confidence, and he determined to quit Syria, and march to Grand Cairo.

His good fortune, in conjunction with the sheik Daher, had raised expectations of still greater success ; and believing in astrology, as many of the Turks and Egyptians do, he was confirmed in his resolution to visit Egypt, by the influence of Resh, a favourite caya, whose predictions had often, he thought, been fulfilled, and who now assured him, that

the hand of fate would raise him to the throne of Egypt.

Burning with impatience, he put every wheel in motion to hasten his departure, and convey him rapidly to Egypt. Being unable to pay Daher the money which was stipulated for his assistance, he delivered to him, by way of pledge, the town of Jaffa, and his other conquests in Syria. Ali was too ardent in his views to wait for the Russian troops who had been promised for his assistance, and who did arrive after his departure, but too late to follow him with a prospect of advantage.

Upon his flight from Egypt, Ali Bey had conducted an army into Syria, which amounted to about 7,000 men; and, notwithstanding the losses he sustained in beys and other soldiers, yet, by the assistance of Daher, he returned to Cairo with a force which amounted to more than 6,000. But the business in which they were engaged was arduous in its nature, and full of danger. Entering a

country which was occupied by an enemy, they were exposed to open force, as well as secret designs ; and, when passing through the desert which lies between Gaza and Egypt, they were met by powerful bands, whom Mohammed Bey had dispatched to lie in wait, and intercept them.

The hostile armies met, and the circumstances of the engagement are variously stated, but the result was unequivocal, for Ali Bey was wounded and taken prisoner. When conveyed to his rival, Mohammed, that victorious bey received him with the profoundest marks of respect. For a moment, perhaps, the consciousness of ingratitude might thrill his soul, because Ali had cherished him and raised him to power. In the presence of his legitimate master, the former habits of obedience might give a temporary impulse of submission ; but these feelings, if really put in exercise, were of short and ineffectual duration ; for on the third day after this apparently

tender and impressive meeting, the unfortunate Ali Bey died, and that, as was supposed, by private and villainous conduct.*

Thus the blazing star which attracted the notice of the whole civilized world was suddenly plucked from its sphere, and Egypt was again cast into darkness. Ali Bey was possessed of a vigorous mind, and the active powers of his body were conspicuously displayed in the horsemanship and military exercises which constitute the chief part of a Mamluke's education. He had capacity to conceive vast designs; but the deficiency of mental improvement marred his projects, and rendered him unsuccessful. The untoward circumstances of Egypt contributed their part in thwarting his views; for although of twenty-four beys eighteen of them were in his interest, yet some of them were killed

* Rev. of Ali Bey, p. 142, 143; et Volney, tom. i, ch. 8; and Ann. Register, vol. xvi, p. 15, &c.

in battle; Mohammed rebelled against him; and there were various aspiring factions in the councils and country. Amid those tumults and distractions, there was no fixed point to engage the notice of the people; and, among the numerous candidates for power, there was none sufficiently venerable, either for character or descent, to command the reverence, or obtain the choice, of the multitude.

In such a state of anarchy and degradation, it must have been power and wisdom only which could have stemmed the current of confusion, and erected a new government upon a solid foundation. The attention of Ali Bey to the internal prosperity of the country, would have secured him in the love and affections of the people, if his profuse conduct and expensive foreign wars had not increased the tribute, and loaded them with taxes.

Some late years had rather been scanty in the produce of the fields; the sup-

plies for the troops on foreign service had tended to drain the country of provisions ; and the increased demand encouraging speculation, the people complained of the hardships, and, in seeking redress, were ready to change masters.^b

Upon the defeat of Ali Bey, his troops fled toward Gaza, where they met sheik Daher, who was waiting with anxiety and ardent expectation. Among the troops whom he had furnished for Ali Bey, were some of his sons, and various connections. Trembling with fear, he viewed the returning and disordered troops ; and foreboding evils which he durst not clothe in language, he met the officers and beys with inexpressible perturbation. He read a tale of horror in the countenance of his friends, and he saw there was something more than a common defeat. He mourned for the

^b Ann. Register, vol. xiii, p. 40, 41 ; et Volney, tom. i, ch. 8.

general calamity, and he pitied the lot of Ali Bey ; but the loss of his own son almost overwhelmed him. The joints of his knees seemed to be loosed ; his whole frame shook ; and though on the verge of ninety, when the fibres have become stiff, and the feelings are considerably blunted, yet the pangs of affliction were violent, and his hoary reverend beard was drenched with the tears of anguish.

Many had been his sorrows ; often had the tale of affliction reached his ears ; and frequently had his eyes beheld scenes of accumulated woe ; but never till now had hope so completely deserted him, nor despair entered so deep into his soul. His friends soothed him with sympathy and tenderness, but his weakness could scarcely be supported, and his affliction was too great ever to be removed. The opening prospects and returning joys of better days and smiling scenes may comfort a younger and more vigorous mind, but no brightness of the seasons could

ever cheer the heart of Daher, and his future engagements in the world were uniformly mixed with uneasiness, and the darkness of sorrow clouded the evening of his life.

His sons, who survived, being undutiful in their deportment, were frequently in rebellion against their father; and, in the general depression of his mind, he committed the conduct of his affairs to Ibrahim Sabah, who was not respected for his talents, and who, in every action, endeavoured to enlarge his own treasures, rather than promote his master's interest.

When the bey was cut off, his ungrateful slave and rival, Mohammed, was left in quiet possession of the Egyptian government. But though there was then no symptom of danger, yet he knew that the disappointed factions were far from being satisfied, and that much was to be apprehended.

Mohammed Bey was impatient of restraint, and ardently longed for inde-

pendent power; but while he was fearful of danger at home, he looked with terror to the arms and resources of Constantinople. The Turks, indeed, were at that time embroiled with the empress of Russia, and had neither leisure nor ability to correct the insurgents of Egypt, but when peace with their neighbours should return, he apprehended a day of reckoning and a season of chastisement.

To have an appearance of loyalty, and thereby to avoid the punishment of rebellion, Mohammed Bey transmitted the tribute to Constantinople, which, for the space of six years, had uniformly been withheld. This return of obedience, which the government of Egypt had displayed, was the more agreeable to the Ottoman court, as it both supplied them with money, and, without compulsion, or the expence of blood, restored a valuable and important province. In the first movements of gratitude and joy, the court of Constantinople raised Mo-

hammed Bey from the office of sheik al Belled, in which capacity he had exercised the sovereign authority, and constituted him viceroy of the Sublime Porte. Flattered by this distinguished mark of voluntary respect, he artfully concealed the disappointment which he felt in being still obliged to bow to the power of the grand signior. To ingratiate himself yet more with the court of Constantinople, he offered to march into Syria, and turn his arms against the sheik Daher.

He knew that this proposal would be agreeable to the grand signior ; but Mohammed had other motives for undertaking this warlike enterprise. He had been chid by Daher for abandoning the conquests in Syria, which he so easily and fortunately obtained in the name of Ali Bey. This reproof alluded to his treacherous flight ; and rousing within him the feelings of revenge, he became then the secret, and now the avowed enemy of Daher. He was likewise stimu-

lated by the desire of obtaining the valuable treasures which Ibrahim Sabah had avariciously amassed; and he was also eager to obtain settlements in Syria. A day might arrive, when he would be able to defy the restraints of Constantinople; and if he should acquire independent power, he foresaw the advantage of enjoying, in Syria, barrier possessions against the intrusions and force of the eastern powers. In the state of weakness in which we have already contemplated the sheik Daher, Mohammed Pasha encountered few difficulties in putting the aged sheik, with his adherents to flight, and in possessing himself of Acre, as well as Jaffa. But in the commission of many severities, and in meditating acts of oppression and cruelty, he was seized by a malignant fever, and in June, A. D. 1776, he died, in the prime of life, and in the second day of his illness. The sheik Daher was afterwards betrayed, and, in the feebleness of old age, was put to death.

His head was sent to Constantinople, and his splendid career was mournfully closed.*

Mohammed Bey was as skilful in address as he was brave in arms. We have seen him bending to circumstances, and while he panted for the glory of a throne he feigned submission to the court of Constantinople. He not only endeavoured to render himself popular in Egypt, and respected by the grand signior, but he courted the approbation of the christian nations. The religious pride of the Musslemans displays itself, on every occasion, against the followers of Jesus ; and, excepting a few instances, where the agents of powerful states have, at the risk of their lives, vindicated the dignity of their country, the most exalted characters of the christian faith are not permitted, in Egypt, to ride on horseback, but upon an ass.

* Volney, tom. i, ch. 8 ; et tom. ii, ch. 25.

A. D. 1794, Lord Percy, and the chevalier Barry, however, were courteously received at Cairo, by Mohammed Bey, presented with two horses of great value, and their suite treated in the most distinguished manner. The splendour of Mohammed's equipage and attendants procured him the surname of Abudaheb, or the father of gold; but his reign was of short duration; and in him were strikingly displayed the vanity of pride and excessive ambition.*

A. D. 1776.—No sooner was the death of Mohammed Bey announced in the Egyptian camp than the soldiers fled for safety, and hastened, in a tumultuous march, toward Grand Cairo. The report of this unexpected event outstripped the march of the returning army, and the whole capital was in commotion. Many were the hearts which beat high with ambitious hope; and Ibrahim

* Scots Magazine, vol. xxvi, p. 503.

Bey, who held the office of sheik al Belled, trembled for his own safety, and vigorously pursued measures for securing his power. Murad, who was a man of high consideration, had gone with Mohammed to the campaign in Syria, and he was now hastening homewards to assert his claims of respect and authority. So strongly were both he and Ibrahim supported in their rival pretensions to command, that they paused a while in mutual fear, and each of them stood in an attitude of defiance.

Alarmed for the consequences of a decision by arms, they solemnly agreed to divide the power, and Ibrahim Bey was to continue in the office of sheik al Belled.

In this arrangement they more readily acquiesced, because there were other pretenders, who were rising in power, and threatening to overthrow them. While Mohammed held the reins of government, the beys and officers of the house of Ali were kept in subjection by

the terror of his power ; but now that his authority was dissolved, they collected their force, and had many adherents.

So powerful did their party become, that Ibrahim and Murad were forced to abandon Cairo, and retire into Upper Egypt. But so fluctuating was the state of public affairs, and so variable were the sentiments of the Egyptian armies, that the fugitive beys were soon in a condition to return in great strength ; and the friends of Ali Bey were compelled, in their turn, to flee from Grand Cairo. They formed a temporary settlement in the neighbourhood of Girgeh, which is the principal town of Upper Egypt. But the beys of Grand Cairo did not consider themselves in safety while so large a body of fugitive discontents had a formal residence in any part of the country ; therefore, in April A. D. 1783, Murad Bey marched against them with a numerous army. But, fleeing before him, they posted

themselves among some rocks and precipices, on the borders of Nubia, and the banks of the Nile. Thus being put to defiance, Murad Bey returned to Grand Cairo, and scarcely had he entered his palace, when a new faction created an alarm.

Submission to the authority of Ibrahim and Murad was rather nominal than real; for murmurs of discontent ran through Egypt in all its departments. A number of beys, who had been left unnoticed among the late commotions of the state, now associated themselves in silence, and unexpectedly sprung forth in hostile array. They too were put to flight; but they occupied Miniah, upon the banks of the Nile, and, commanding the navigation of that river, they so obstructed the commerce of the country, that a resolution was taken to have them dislodged. The conduct of this expedition was entrusted to the management of Ibrahim Bey; and, by a treaty of accommodation, rather than by

force of arms, the disappointed beys returned to Grand Cairo. The terms of agreement were not such as Murad approved; and apprehending that the once turbulent, but now submissive beys, were pledged in the interest of his rival Ibrahim, he vowed revenge, and retired into the Said. Recurring adjustments and disputes had hitherto distinguished the associated government of Ibrahim and Murad Bey; for mutual distrust and jealousy were predominant in their souls. How could ambition such as theirs be hushed into repose, while a rival lay in wait to deceive and triumph?

But in the month of March, A. D. 1785, their jarring interests were more completely adjusted, and they agreed once more to reign in harmony, and live in peace. Ibrahim continued in the office of sheik al Belled, which secured to him extensive power in the government; but Murad enjoyed the more lucrative situation of Defterdar, or accountant-general. Having thus the command of the

national supplies, he had great authority in promoting schemes, and much influence in securing adherents. The character of Ibrahim was avaricious, and he maintained his authority, more by interest and cunning, than by daring enterprise, or dexterity in the field. Murad Bey is described as oppressive in his conduct, and profligate in his manners, but possessed of an active mind, and celebrated for ardent pursuits. A country thus situated, and a government so arranged, could neither be quiet, regular, nor secure.^b

The Turks having made a reluctant and transitory peace with the Russians, the court of Constantinople viewed the state of Egypt with regret and indignation. The revolt of that country was a serious loss of itself, but it was more to be lamented, as a conspicuous and dangerous example to other dependent states. Temporizing and half effective

^b Volney, tom. i, ch. 9; and Browne, ch. 6.

measures had long been the impolitic conduct of the enfeebled Ottoman government toward its discontented, and sometimes rebellious provinces; but they now resolved upon a more decided and vigorous conduct, with respect to the Mamlukes and beys of Egypt. They had lately been compelled to part with the provinces of Circassia and Georgia, the country of Crimea, and other districts, which the Russians had seized. The fleets of St. Petersburg were now permitted, by treaty, to traverse the Black sea; and the encroachments of the Russians seemed to pave the way for the total overthrow of the Ottoman empire. To recover Egypt, with its revenues, would infuse new vigour into the constitution; and, under the wise and intrepid conduct of Gazel Hassan, might afford means of expelling the Russians from those Turkish provinces which had lately been ceded to them through fear and necessity.

Hassan Pasha was born in Persia, and

when but a youth was carried into slavery in the province of Romania. After various changes, he entered into the service of the state of Algiers, where he rose to eminence in the armies of that country. But being exposed to the envy of a high station, and subjected to the dangerous and sudden punishments of an irregular and despotic government, he collected what he could obtain of his fortune, and fled into Spain. From that country he got himself conveyed to Constantinople; and, in the service of the grand signior, he displayed his martial spirit, and rose to fame and power. During the late wars with Russia, he communicated the most salutary counsels, and was at length constituted high admiral of the Turkish fleets. To this gallant and judicious officer were committed the care and conduct of the Ottoman expedition which was destined to subdue Egypt.

A. D. 1786.—Having employed his wisdom in arranging the fleets and ar-

mies at home, he set sail for Alexandria ; and, in the month of May 1786, he landed a Turkish army of 25,000 men. The forces of Ibrahim and Murad Bey were drawn out to oppose their progress, and the armies met between Rashid, or Rosetta, and Grand Cairo. That of the Egyptian beys was numerous, and composed of Mamlukes, together with Magrebian soldiers, who came from the north-west parts of Africa, and were much employed in the Egyptian armies. Irregular engagements were repeatedly sustained, and the dexterity of the Mamlukes, who always fight on horseback, frequently threw the Turkish ranks into confusion ; but the superior skill of Hassan finally prevailed, and the forces of the Egyptian beys fled to Girgeh. Thither Hassan Pasha pursued them, and, having come to an engagement, he suffered a defeat. But his troops being at length more accustomed to the country, and Hassan, having concentrated his whole strength, made one

desperate effort, and successfully stormed the camp of the enemy. Ibrahim and Murad Bey, being discouraged by this defeat, listened to humiliating terms of accommodation, and became bound, by treaty, to confine themselves to the division of Upper Egypt. Hassan had offered them those conditions, because he was uncertain whether he could totally subdue them; and because the state of affairs at home required his presence at Constantinople. He collected 6,000,000*l.* sterling of the deficient tribute, restored the Ottoman government at Grand Cairo, and, in the month of October A. D. 1787, he returned to Constantinople amid acclamations of welcome and triumph.*

But the Capitan Pasha of Constantinople had not long been absent from Egypt when the turbulent beys return-

* Ann. Regist. vol. xvi, hist. part, p. 28, &c. ; and New Ann. Regist. A. D. 1787, hist. part.

ed to the Delta, and the leading chiefs resumed their power. Bekir, with the dignified distinction of three tails, arrived at Grand Cairo, and was received as Pasha of Egypt. But his entrance into the city, and his instalment into the office, had not the countenance of the leading chiefs, and was not attended either by Ibrahim or Murad Bey. At a subsequent period, they paid him a ceremonious visit ; but when applied to for the tribute which was due to the grand signior, they acted with reserve, and eluded the demand. Ibrahim asserted, that his connection was solely with those executive employments which did not interfere with the collection or management of the national revenue ; and Murad, who formerly held the office of accountant-general, artfully pretended, that, after so many sufferings, he had retired from public life, and confined himself entirely to rural engagements. The Pasha was referred for information and redress to Elfi and other

beys of increasing power and influence. The times were troublesome, and security of possession, as well as life, was uncertain, and therefore they pretended to inform him, in confidence, that their treasure was concealed in Cara-Medan. But Cara-Medan was a plain without the city, where the beys were exercised in martial movements, and where they sometimes engaged in mock battles. To be directed thither for payment of the tribute, was not only evasive, but intended also to signify, that it would be dangerous for the viceroy, in the exercise of his power, which was then but nominal, to insist upon the stipulated taxes from the beys of Egypt.

But, notwithstanding his pretensions, Murad Bey was as deeply engaged as ever in directing the affairs of Egypt. He dwelt in a palace, which was conspicuously built and adorned, in the village of Giza : he had formed a marine establishment ; but the scale upon which it was extended did not seem to be con-

structed with great skill, nor calculated for extensive enterprise. His vessels were manned with Greek sailors of considerable practice and skill, but none of them were mounted with more than twenty-four guns. Several of them too were moored in the streams of the Nile before Giza, which limited their service, as they could not be removed from that station but during the periodical inundations of the river.

Such imperfect preparations, however, might tend to keep an unimproved country in awe ; and if the armies of Constantinople should again attack the beys in Egypt, their progress would be obstructed on the Nile by the armed vessels which Murad had prepared. The agitated state of Grand Cairo had induced the consuls and most of the foreign merchants to quit the city and remove to Alexandria. But so completely shaken was the whole fabric of government, that there was neither order, security, nor regular obedience, in any

department or town of Egypt. More than others, perhaps, Alexandria was conspicuous for symptoms of discontentment and rebellion. Distracted as the ruling powers were, they threatened, but durst not apply marked severities nor coercion; and the people of Alexandria, though disaffected to the existing circumstances of state affairs, were yet kept in check, and compelled to yield a partial, though unwilling obedience.*

* Browne's Travels, ch. i, vi, and xi.

CHAP. II.

The treaty of Campo Formio. . . . The French take Malta. . . . Alexandria. . . . Reach Grand Cairo. . . . Admiral Nelson. . . . Battle of the Nile. . . . The form of government which the French introduced into Egypt. . . . Bonaparte marches into Syria. . . . Jaffa. . . . St. John d'Acre. . . . The siege of it abandoned. . . . Desaix's operations in Upper Egypt. . . . A Turkish army land at Abukir. . . . Subdued by Bonaparte. . . . He returns to France. . . . A new form of government there. . . . Bonaparte becomes first consul. . . . Afterwards crowned emperor. . . . His character. . . . The treaty of Al Arish. . . . The death of Kleber. . . . Menou succeeds to the chief command in Egypt.

A. D. 1798. **A** LONG series of victories, and frequently-repeated triumphs, had given splendour and fame to the republican armies of France. They had vanquished Holland, shaken

Austria, overthrown the states of Venice, and trampled upon the independence of Italy. Moving in the greatness of power, and stalking in the pride of conquest, the threatenings of France alarmed the nations and over-awed the feeble. Peace was successively sought by many of the degraded states; and at length the emperor of Germany cast, at the feet of the triumphant Bonaparte, the long and well earned laurels of his family and nation. At Campo Formio, near Udine, upon the 17th of October 1797, a treaty was entered into with the French republic, by which the emperor of Germany ceded to that nation his valuable possessions in the Low countries, and acknowledged their sovereignty over all the islands in the Levant which had lately belonged to Venice, as well as the districts of Italy which had lately constituted a part of his own empire. Venice, and several territories of importance, were granted to the emperor of Germany, but they did not recover his

lost fame, nor restore him to his rank in the scale of Europe. In the subsequent negotiations, his weakness was felt, and his degradation was made apparent.

The arrangements at Campo Formio disengaged the hero of Italy from the ardent pursuits of war, and afforded him an opportunity of returning to Paris. But leisure and inactivity were not suitable to his vigorous and ardent mind. The enterprising spirit of this successful and popular general might also create fear, and excite alarms, in the government of France. General Bonaparte had not expressed a wish to interfere in the management of civil affairs, and perhaps the ambition to govern had not then been recognised among the numerous affections of a busy and aspiring mind. But those who sat at the helm of the state knew from what unexpected quarters storms had risen, and they were well aware how, and by what means, many of themselves had acquired power

and influence in the nation. However honourable therefore the sentiments might be which they entertained of that favourite general, yet he had a numerous army at his command, which might create alarms and forbode danger.

Many fair promises had been made to the nation which could not be fulfilled; and the soldiers had been taught to expect rewards which were not in the power of government to bestow. Veterans had returned from the field of success, and would naturally expect to receive a proof of their country's gratitude; and the less experienced soldier would be as apt to expect, and perhaps more rash and decided in demanding, the rewards of danger. While the victories of France were humbling the adjoining nations, there was one kingdom which reared its head in sight of the Gallic shores, and thundered defiance to the powers of France. In proportion to the triumphs of the republic, so was the pride of France hurt, and all its plea-

sures embittered, by the defiance and firm attitude of Great Britain. The French resolved to strike a blow, but how to accomplish their object was easier conceived than put into execution.

After the respite granted by the treaty of peace which was entered into at Campo Formio, the threats against Britain were redoubled, and the forces which were collected on the northern coast were distinguished by the high-sounding name of the Army of England. The seas being well defended by the vessels and fleets of the British nation, were scarcely to be attempted by the numerous flotillas and vessels which the conveyance of a competent number of troops would unavoidably require. The coast of France too being partly in sight of the English shore, and the whole ports being closely watched, the danger of invasion was not then productive of much uneasiness, and yet the attempt was not rashly to be despised. Daring

and almost incredible things had been performed by France ; and there were disloyal movements in the British dominions at home, which amounted to more than suspicion or surmise.

When the spirit of liberty acquired such strength in France, as to break the shackles of a despotic government and assert the genuine rights of man, the sons of freedom every where rejoiced, and sympathetic feeling was variously displayed. But discerning minds soon perceived that the newly acquired liberty of the French was hurrying them beyond the bounds of prudence, and that many dangers were gathering in their paths. Every distinction of civil society was formally abolished ; and it was justly suspected, that destroying the habitual reverence for the established order and degrees of the state would introduce licentiousness, and be the forerunner of destruction. The throne was at length stained with the blood of their

sovereign, and horror joined with disorder stalked abroad in ghastly forms.

It was then seen what a dangerous thing it is to destroy the ancient landmarks and fences of a government; and to permit the innovating spirit of wildness to roam about in untrodden and untried courses. In the ferment of revolutionary changes, moderation and wisdom are exposed to reprehension, as culpable timidity and antiquated prejudice. The bold and designing displace the wary and prudent; and these having acted their part, are compelled to yield their situation to profligate and more daring projectors. Thus self-interest and licentiousness reign, while public good and national advantage are totally forgotten, or shamefully betrayed. Such was the progress of that revolution in France which oppression had occasioned, and which promised so much in the first steps of its career. The spell of its original charms was soon broken, and France itself found the national hopes

vanish in disappointment. The weight and noise of their chains soon informed the people that, while they slumbered in the lap of deception and abused confidence, they were bound in fetters more galling than those which they had anxiously attempted to break.

But after all those decided proofs, such is the power of prejudice and the influence of misguided zeal, that there were still many who could not give up the liberty of France, who viewed the evils which had happened as unavoidable effects of necessary and gigantic changes. They still hoped, that from the ruins and ashes of liberty, a renovated and pure constitution would arise. It was in this state of things that the Army of England multiplied its numbers on the coast of France. The peculiar circumstances of Ireland had not rendered it expedient in the wisdom of the king and parliament to bestow on that nation every immunity and blessing which Great Britain enjoyed. Many

subjects, dutiful and loyal, had humbly implored an extension of privileges and rights ; but, under their wing, designing and seditious men aimed a dangerous blow, and vowed the subversion of the kingly government.

They were seduced by the professions of revolutionary France ; and they not only desired to copy its example, but they accepted its proffered friendship, and warmly solicited its aid. Could the governors of that nation have conveyed to the discontented party in Ireland that military strength which they were able and disposed to afford, they might have entertained a hope of indulging their hatred by humbling Britain. Thus they might have had sanguine views of ranking Ireland among those republics, or kingdoms, which were under the protection, or in more explicit language, under the power, and subject to the direction of ambitious France. For Ireland, as a separate nation, could not, in

the neighbourhood of such powerful states, either establish or maintain an independent government.

She is naturally the sister of Great Britain; the interests of the two nations are mutually connected; and we trust that the union which is now formed will promote the general advantage, by enlarging the happiness, and adding to the dignity of the whole.

A. D. 1799.—While the public were amused with the designs of France upon Great Britain and Ireland, numerous artificers were at work at the port of Toulon, fitting out a fleet for a secret and important expedition. Suddenly troops were ordered to march for that harbour; the command of the fleet was given to Admiral Brueys, and General Bonaparte was constituted commander in chief of a well appointed army. The soldiers, including cavalry and corps of artillery, amounted to 40,000 men; and the greater number of those troops had been accustomed to war, and the trophies of

success. The fleet sailed from Toulon about the end of May, and directed their course for Malta. A sixty gun ship entered the harbour of that island; and under various pretences the troops and sailors attempted to land, but were resisted by the knights of Malta, and compelled to retire.

Soon afterwards, upon the 6th of June, a considerable division of the fleet approached the island, and, with assurances of peace, made repeated efforts to be received on shore. Upon the 9th of June Bonaparte appeared with the remaining part of the fleet; and being also treated with reserve, and kept at a distance, he opened a tremendous fire of cannon upon the houses and forts. The knights surrendered; and, upon the morning of the next day, the French forces took possession of Malta. Goza was also taken, and Malta with all its dependencies was surrendered to victorious France. The conduct which had been pursued in Italy, and other countries,

which the French warriors had visited, alarmed the people of Malta, and induced them to resist the landing, as well as suspect the friendship which Brueys and Bonaparte pretended to offer.

The power of the knights of Malta was feebleness itself, when compared with the strength of France ; but many a dreadful battle the knights of the crusade had fought, and frequently had they struck terror into the armies and generals of celebrated nations. For many years, however, the affairs of Europe, and the Turkish concerns in the east, had assumed a different shape, and the valiant knights of Malta had ceased to engage in such extensive scenes of warfare as former circumstances compelled them to do. The sword of their might had almost become rusty in its scabbard ; and their native courage was not roused and improved by recent wars, nor great and frequently recurring conflicts. But the ease with which they yielded to the arms of France was not

to be attributed to dastardly sentiments, nor the want of courage; there was treason in the councils of Malta, and republican principles pervaded the island.

Hompesh, the grand master of the order, is suspected of having been tainted with revolutionary ideas; and he did not carry with him into his retirement the love of his brethren, nor the esteem of the world. His pension prevented the fears of poverty; but it sunk him deeper in the implications of treachery, and undutiful conduct.*

No sooner had the French taken possession of Malta, than they changed the form of its government, and enriched themselves with plunder. Four thousand troops were left to defend the place, and keep the people in awe; for, valuable as the capture of that island was, it formed but a subordinate part of the great plan, which Bonaparte was

* New Ann. Reg. hist. part, p. 313, &c.; and Boisselin's hist. of Malta, Lond. 4to, vol. iii, p. 77, &c.

required to execute. His destination was next to Egypt, and the possession of that country was proposed, as a necessary expedient for injuring the trade, and finally overthrowing the power, of the British in India. Upon the 19th of June 1798 the fleet of France set sail from Malta, and, by an addition to the number of its vessels, it then consisted of fifteen sail of the line, with two hundred and sixty transports, frigates, and ether vessels of small force. Notwithstanding the bustle on the northern coast of France, and the secrecy with which the preparations were made in the port of Toulon, yet the vigilance of the British ministry was not to be deceived, and they soon found that a great and undeclared scheme was hastening to a point.

Admiral Sir Horatio Nelson, being appointed to the command of a squadron, was enjoined to watch the motions of the French fleet; and to adopt measures for defeating their views. When

he looked into the port of Toulon, he found they had escaped from that harbour, and immediately supposed that their course was directed to Egypt. It was but two days after they had left Malta, when the ships of the British admiral appeared off that island; and though he was made acquainted with the change which the knights had undergone, yet he could not then stay to assist them, but crouding sail, stood after the fleet of Brueys; for the principal object was to prevent the enemy from landing in Egypt, or on the coast of Syria.

The French fleet appear to have directed their course along the northern coast of the Mediterranean sea, and to have passed by the island of Candia, while Admiral Nelson kept near the African shore, and thereby performed his voyage to the coast of Egypt without having met, or even seen the ships of Brueys. While off the port of Alexandria, he sent on shore, and held com-

munications with the town ; but not finding it expedient to wait upon that station, he directed his course into the Levant.

It is easy to see, that a variety of anxious thoughts must have crouded into the mind of the British admiral. As the destination of the French fleet was unquestionably hostile to the interest of his country, Sir Horatio Nelson, in the spirit of a true patriot, was desirous of stopping their progress, and defeating the end which they had in view. As a naval officer, his character was at stake, and he was anxious for his own reputation, as well as for the honour of the fleet which was entrusted to his command.

Soon after his departure from the Egyptian coast, the fleet of admiral Brueys made its appearance, toward the Lybian shore, a few leagues to the westward of Alexandria. Upon the 1st of July, measures were taken to bring the French consul from Alexandria, toge-

ther with the merchants which belonged to the republic. The consul was allowed to depart from the city, upon the express promise of a speedy return; but the merchants were detained as hostages for the Turkish government; and the whole inhabitants were alarmed at the arrival of a numerous and formidable fleet. The report of the revolutionary and grasping system of France had reached Egypt, through a variety of channels, and various uneasy sensations pervaded that country. The Turkish divan saw, in the appearance of a French fleet, the commencement of a plan which might, in the first instance, be designed to operate against Great Britain; but which would certainly affect the interests of the grand signior, and might ultimately overthrow his government. The beys were aiming at independence; and to this point all their proceedings for many years had tended. The enfeebled state of the Ottoman government encouraged their hopes;

and opened a prospect of final success ; but if the French should invade, and overcome, the dearest and most ardent expectations of the Mamluke race would be dashed, and destroyed on the field of battle.

Thus the divan of Cairo and the beys of Egypt united their jarring interests, and were ready to resist the designs of France. Thus the fleet of Brueys and the army of Bonaparte were placed in a situation of difficulty and danger. If they looked toward Egypt, they saw the hazard of attempting to land upon a hostile shore, which was rendered difficult of access by banks of sand, and reefs of rocks. If they surveyed the sea, they saw the danger of a storm upon such a coast, and imagination did not present a distant object upon the waves, but anxiety suggested, that the ships of Admiral Nelson were returning. With so many transports, and every vessel in the fleet crouded with troops, an attack

from a powerful enemy could not have failed to be dreadful and ruinous.

In this situation not a moment was to be lost in doubt or inactivity ; and here was an occasion where the brave and daring spirit of Bonaparte was called to exercise its native vigour.

Ever ready to obey the call of danger, he issued orders in what manner the troops were to be landed ; and springing into a boat, he encouraged the army, and led the way toward the shore. His example was quickly followed, but the fleet was at anchor three leagues from the shore ; the north wind blew fresh, and it was not till the approach of night that they reached the breakers, which lay between them and the tower of the Arabs,^a on the island of Marabû, where they were directed to land.

No sooner was a division of the troops on shore, than they were marched a little forward into the desert, and drawn

^a The tower of the Arabs was a neat square building upon the island, which served as a land mark, or beacon, for ships.

up in proper form. As the successive divisions arrived, they too were thrown into military array. The prompt measures which were necessary to be pursued did not allow the commander in chief to delay the march of his troops to Alexandria till the whole were disembarked; and therefore, in the morning of July 2^d, between two and three o'clock, the army of France began to advance in columns.

General Bon commanded on the right, General Kleber in the centre, and General Menou on the left. About 36,000^b troops appear to have landed from France; but it is not correctly ascertained how many of them were led on to the first attack of Alexandria. They have been stated at 2,000; but Bonaparte at his first landing is represented as forming on the plain a division of 4,300. In various parts of the intercepted letters, the forces which

^b A number was left to garrison Malta.

were landed upon the morning of July 2^d, are asserted to have been numerous ; and adjutant-general Boyer states them at 25,000 men.* They were probably few at first, but before they reached Alexandria they would naturally be much increased by the successive parties which arrived upon the shore.

The sharp-shooters and some of the most expert soldiers in the army were appointed to advance as skirmishers in the front. Half an hour before the dawning of the day a detached party of Arabs made their appearance, and, on the whole way to Alexandria, the advance guards were occasionally engaged. Little inconvenience was felt from those partial and irregular attacks ; but, as the army approached the walls and ruined towers of ancient Alexandria, numbers of the enemy appeared in readiness to

* Berthier's Memoirs, 8vo, London, A. D. 1805, p. 12 ; and Intercepted letters, 8vo, London, A. D. 1798, p. 2 & 132, &c.

fight and oppose. When the French army was within cannon shot of the enemy's position, Bonaparte, who was marching in advance with his personal attendants and staff, attempted a parley, and was desirous of making adjustments, which might have prevented the effusion of human blood. But instead of a conversation or treaty, there were lifted up the shouts of war, mixed with the shrieks of women and the cries of children. Batteries were opened upon the French lines, muskets were fired from the towers, and stones thrown upon them from the mouldering walls. Some of the army were wounded, and several of them killed; but the resistance which the forces of Bonaparte here experienced was not of that description to damp their courage or to abate their confidence.

A charge was beat, the walls were scaled, and many of the enemy fled into the town. It was now that the commander in chief took possession of some

hills which were near the shore, and afforded a favourable situation for annoying the town. But the city refused to capitulate, and a stout resistance was made to the attacks of the French. Galled by the fire from the town, and mad at the opposition which was given them, the French army rushed into the city of Alexandria, and a dreadful slaughter ensued. In the midst of the prevailing horrors, the people fled for safety; but the suppliant found no mercy, the young and the helpless were not spared in the general carnage; and the mosques themselves afforded no protection from the brutal fury of the enraged soldiers. During the space of four hours were the people of Alexandria exposed to insults, terror, and death. Wearied with slaughter, and satiated with destruction, the French army was reduced to order, and an awful pause of stillness and consternation ensued.*

* Berthier, p. 12, 13, &c.; and Intercepted letters, p. 136, 137.

The naval officers contributed essentially toward the success of the day; and though the loss of Bonaparte's troops is not estimated at more than 150 men; yet both Kleber and Menou were wounded, and several officers of consideration lost their lives. Bonaparte speedily adopted measures for regulating the town, and preserving in safety what he had acquired; but his stay in Alexandria was short, for in order to secure Egypt, Grand Cairo must be taken. The troops which remained on board the transports were now disembarked at the port of Maabu, and orders were given to have the fleet moored before Abukir. This station was favourable in the meantime, as it kept the communication open between the ports of Alexandria and the Rosetta branch of the Nile. But as the coast at Abukir did not afford them shelter, nor a place of safety, Admiral Brueys was commanded to have the fleet conveyed, if possible, into the old port of Alex-

andria, which is the best harbour in Egypt.

There are two ways from Alexandria to Grand Cairo, the one across the desert, and the other by Rosetta and the Nile. Expedition was a necessary part of this intended journey, for the accounts of what was done at Alexandria would soon alarm the whole country, and every day the business before them would increase in danger. The way by Rosetta was not only more tedious, but that town was still in the possession of the Turks, and therefore the route was fixed by the desert. At the same time Bonaparte prepared a small flotilla to sail up the Nile and meet the army at Rahmah. The command of this flotilla was given to citizen Perée; and General Kleber having been appointed governor of Alexandria, the troops which he usually commanded were intrusted to the direction of General Dugua. This division of the army, in addition to the dismounted cavalry, were to be employed

in protecting the flotilla, and in taking possession of Rosetta.

Upon the 6th of July, General Desaix proceeded across the desert with the first division of the army ; and upon the 8th there was a general muster at Damanhûr. There, having rested a day, they renewed their march and advanced toward the banks of the Nile. But the supply of water, which is unavoidably scanty in such situations, was rendered more precarious by the Arabs and Mamlukes ; for in order to distress their enemies, they had filled up several of the best wells, which the attention of ages had gradually discovered, and carefully preserved. Compelled to march in divisions, for the purpose of being supplied even with a small portion of water, they were exposed to the fury of the Mamlukes, who assembled in numbers and watched their motions.

At length the Nile appeared in view, and who can describe the feelings and joy of the French ? They hastened to

its streams, and drank largely of its waters. Exhausted by fatigue, hunger, and thirst, the army required rest and support. During the two days which they remained in this situation, Desaix arrived; but, from the shallowness of the river, the flotilla had met with obstructions, and remained a little behind. The wind springing up, however, it passed the army, and was attacked by some jermes of Murad Bey, and fellas, or peasants, who were numerous upon the banks. The flotilla was in danger; but the army of Bonaparte fortunately arrived, put the Mamlukes to flight, and afterwards routed them, with considerable loss, at the village of Shebrissa.^b

The army continued its march, and, upon the 19th of July, arrived at Ameldinar, near the upper part of the Delta. Here the commander in chief received information that Murad Bey had ap-

^b Berthier, p. 22, 23, &c.; and Intercepted letters, p. 139, &c.

peared in great force at the village of Embaba, on the left bank of the Nile, opposite to Bulak. At two o'clock in the morning of July the 20th, the French army moved forward to meet that formidable and enterprising chief. About day break, the advanced guard, which was under the command of General Desaix, observed, at no great distance, a considerable body of the enemy, but, upon seeing the French army, they immediately retired; and it was not till the afternoon that the Mamlukes were seen in their full force.

The heat of the day was excessive, and the French army were almost overcome. Destitute of the necessary means to refresh them, the commander in chief employed such methods as their untoward circumstances could supply. When the troops of Bonaparte halted to enjoy a little repose, the army of Murad Bey were instantly formed in order of battle. There was something impressive and awful at that moment. The French

were sensible of their own superiority, both in numbers and military skill, and they did not despond; but they were situated in an enemy's country, where every thing was different from those scenes of Europe where they had fought and conquered. The army of Murad Bey consisted of 6,000 Mamlukes, together with a multitude of Arabs, fellas, and other attendants. The armour of the Mamlukes, and the accoutrements of their steeds were costly and splendid. They sparkled and shone amid the radiance of the sun, and the horses foamed and pawed with eagerness for the battle. Over the right of the army were beheld the city of Grand Cairo, the castle, which overtops the town, and the mountain of Mocattem rising in proud eminence behind. Over the left of the Mamluke army, the pyramids of Giza appeared in awful grandeur, on the brink of the Lybian desert, and, at a distance, on the rear, were the plains where Memphis once stood. The scenes were

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all clothed in the majesty of ancient importance, and the whole circumstances were striking and awful.

The army of the French was formed in divisions, and so arranged as to assist and protect one another. The word of command was given to advance, and when the Mamlukes observed the enemy in motion, they rushed forward with impetuous courage. They seemed as if they would attack the centre, but suddenly changing their course, they poured with incredible swiftness upon the divisions of Regnier and Desaix, which formed the right of the French army. Those veteran columns of the republic stood unmoved, till the cavalry of Murad Bey had advanced within half range of musket-shot, and then a steady fire from the ranks wounded many, and killed numbers. Still the Mamlukes pushed forward, and rushed upon the well-directed bayonets; but their impetuous rashness was the forerunner of destruction, for their ranks were thinned, and

the field was covered with the slain. While the divisions of Regnier and Dessaix were thus engaged, those of Bon and Menou, in connection with Kleber's troops, which General Dugua commanded, made an attack upon the village of Embaba. Masked batteries were opened upon the French soldiers; but they soon took possession of the entrenchments, and spread such desolation that Grand Cairo itself trembled.

The plunder of Murad's camp was of great value, and yielded a seasonable supply to the exhausted army of the French. In those turbulent times the Mamlukes carried about with them a considerable part of their property in gold; and, while the camels, baggage, and cannon, which were left behind, were suitable to the wants of the Republican forces, the soldiers were enriched by the money and costly ornaments of the Mamlukes and beys. The feats of this day cost the French but a small number of men, and they gained

the possession of Giza, the country adjoining, and the island of Roda.

On the morning of the following day, which was the 22^d of July, such public functionaries and principal inhabitants as had remained in Cairo, appeared upon the banks of the Nile, and offered to surrender the city, provided their lives, property, and rights, should be respected and preserved.

To allay the ferment at Alexandria, Bonaparte had issued a proclamation in the Arabic language, in which every thing was promised which the most anxious mind could desire. It contained the highest sentiments of respect for the Ottoman government, and only vowed war against the turbulent beys, who had long distressed the Turkish government. Every peaceable inhabitant was to be protected, and the Mohammedan faith graciously cherished.

The opinions of mankind are seldom changed, but by the cautious progress of slow degrees and religious sentiments

sink peculiarly deep into the mind. It would therefore be cruel and unjust to attempt by force to propagate even truth itself. The ancient heroes of Rome revered the religion and laws of those countries which they subdued ; and the wisdom of latter times has led men to respect the opinions and habits of the people whom they have conquered. To have pursued a course different from this, would neither have been consistent with Bonaparte's views, nor the general strain of his political conduct. But it will stand recorded against truth and integrity, that he was a friend to the Moslem creed, and that the people of France were faithful sons of Mohammed. Was it possible that the scepticism of France, which had lately professed to revere nothing but the eternal laws of nature, could have been so much changed, and become so credulous and inconsistent; as, after having thrown off the very garb and form of christianity, to adopt the incoherent and degrading precepts of

the Arabian prophet. Such professions might have a temporary effect, but they would pass away like the delusive shape of an airy vision, and leave nothing but regret and disappointment.^d

Though the French entered Egypt with declarations of regard to the Ottoman court, yet their pretensions but increased the alarm which their appearance on the coast had occasioned. Their hostile views could not be concealed, and their proceedings, under the guise of friendship, were more to be feared than open and avowed designs. The beys, against whom the French had professed hostilities, and the Turks, whom they pretended to respect, were equally jealous of their conduct, and united their efforts to overthrow the power of their common enemy. When Murad Bey was defeated near Embaba, or, as the French express it, at the battle of the pyramids,

^d Berthier, p. 29, 30, &c.; and Intercepted letters, No. 32; and Append. No. 1.

he fled toward Saccara; and, when the army of Bonaparte were on the point of entering Grand Cairo, Ibrahim Bey and his followers marched with precipitation into the eastern parts of the Delta. The Pasha of Grand Cairo fled with Ibrahim, but from political, or perhaps selfish motives, his caya remained and entered into the service of the French.

Desaix was appointed to hold Murad Bey in check, and general Le Clerc, who was afterwards the brother-in-law of Bonaparte, and died at St. Domingo, was intrusted with a detachment of troops to take a position at Alhanka, and watch the motions of the fugitive Ibrahim. This bey was using his utmost exertions to increase his army, and render the fellas hostile to the French. The proceedings of this chief were assuming a formidable shape, and Bonaparte found it expedient to leave Grand Cairo, and to pursue him with a numerous army. Ibrahim Bey fled at their approach, and posted his army at Salehiah. Upon his

march thither he met with the caravan of Mecca, which was journeying through Egypt, toward the western parts of Africa, and having alarmed the numerous company of which it was composed, the Mamlukes and most active part of the people left their fellow-travellers, and joined the army of that powerful chief. The remaining part of the caravan was put under the escort of a party of Arabs; and when met by Bonaparte, in his pursuit of Ibrahim, it chiefly consisted of women and children, and such as were enfeebled by age. Little of their merchandize was to be found, for the most valuable part had been carried off by the army of Ibrahim Bey, and the weakened caravan had become an easy prey to the rapacious sheiks of the wandering Arabs.

The French armies had been notorious for plundering in Egypt, as well as they had been in Europe; and we shall not venture to surmise what conduct they would have pursued, if the caravan

had met them in the pride of its riches, and in full possession of its wealth. But the state of its weakness and affliction demanded the compassion of the French commander in chief, and therefore, taking it under his protection, he sent it with a safe convoy to the city of Grand Cairo. In the afternoon of the 11th of August, the advanced guard of the French army came within sight of the village of Salehiah ; but at their approach the troops of Ibrahim retired. Some partial engagements, however, took place, in which the troops of Bonaparte decidedly triumphed. Ibrahim Bey fled toward Syria, and was successful in taking with him his principal attendants, his women, his valuable effects, and the baggage of the army. But Bonaparte could not immediately pursue the fugitives, for the circumstances of Egypt demanded his attendance at Grand Cairo. The division of Regnier was left at Salehiah, that of General Dugua was ordered to take possession of Damietta,

and, by the assistance of Caffarelli, commandant of the engineers, the various fortifications which they had acquired in this expedition were put in a favourable state of defence.*

While Bonaparte was returning to Grand Cairo, his spirits were damped, and his fears excited, by the report of an engagement which had lately taken place in the bay of Abukir. The fleet of Admiral Nelson had been in quest of the French, toward the coast of Greece, from the time that they had sought them in vain in the Egyptian seas. We have found that the French were under apprehensions that the British squadron would return, and that the fleet of the republic would be exposed to a dangerous attack. Some frigates belonging to the British, which were in search of Sir Horatio Nelson's ships, appeared off the coast of Alexandria upon the 21st of July, and, raising the alarm, put the

* Berthier Memoir, p. 33, 34, &c.

French more effectually upon their guard. Their transport vessels had been left in the port of Alexandria, but thirteen line of battle ships, together with four frigates, were anchored in the bay of Abukir.

The French admiral, Brueys, had discovered considerable caution, and manifested a great degree of skill, in arranging his ships and providing against danger. Large vessels are prevented by the shallowness of the water from approaching near the shore of Abukir; but the French admiral moored his ships at a proper distance, and placed them in a curved line, according to the direction of the deep water. The headmost vessel was placed as near a sand-bank as possible, the line of battle was flanked by frigates, and the van was protected by a battery which was raised upon a small island. The squadron of Admiral Nelson having found out the situation of the French vessels, directed their course toward Alexandria; and

upon the 31st of July were seen from the roads of Abukir. Upon the 1st of August they bore down with a press of sail toward the French fleet, which were at anchor; and to prevent misfortunes, there was a British brig ahead taking soundings, and pointing out the way.

The wind blew from the north, and two vessels were dispatched from the French fleet to prevent the British from continuing their soundings, and to incommode, as much as possible, the progress of their fleet. Between five and six o'clock in the afternoon the guns upon the battery of the island threw some bombs among Admiral Nelson's ships, and soon afterwards the French admiral threw out the signal for a general engagement. Sir Horatio Nelson was determined to break the enemy's line, and, with undaunted courage, as well as unequalled dexterity, he accomplished the difficult, but important object. On a sudden, shortening sail, he directed a part of his vessels between the French

fleet and that very sand-bank which the republican admiral had viewed as a complete protection on that quarter. Thus several of the British ships, having run between the enemy and the shore, drew up alongside and dropped anchor, while others moored within pistol-shot of the French fleet on the opposite side; and thus a considerable part of the republican vessels were exposed on both sides to a cross and destructive fire.

The ships which were thus in the direction of the British thunder were soon subdued; and when these had yielded to the superior power of their foe, the vessels of Sir Horatio Nelson dropped further down by each side of the French line, and similar success followed every British movement. The French were deficient neither in courage nor skill; but, with all the advantages of situation and numbers, they could not resist the intrepid and dexterous conduct of the British squadron. The ships under the command of Sir Horatio Nelson had

first approached the bay of Alexandria, but, finding nothing except transports in the harbours of that city, they stood out again to sea. Having soon discovered the French ships of war in the bay of Abukir, they steered toward that station ; but, in turning the point where there is an island and a reef of rocks, the Culloden ran aground upon a sand-bank, and other two were in danger of a similar misfortune. Three of the British ships fell so much astern, that neither they nor the Culloden could be brought into the action.

Thus with ten ships of the line, the British admiral had to engage thirteen belonging to the enemy, which were equal, and some of them superior in force to those of Sir Horatio Nelson. The French fleet was supported by the fire of four frigates, while the British admiral had only one brig to employ in expeditious movements. L'Orient, the flag ship of Admiral Brueys, was a three-decker, and carried 120 guns, and his

fleet was so formed at anchor, in the bay of Abukir, that it might be rather considered as a floating battery than a fleet of ships drawn up in a line of battle. Yet with all those advantages, and defended by two pieces of ordnance upon the island, which the British fleet had to turn, as well as protected by the shoal which has already been described, Sir Horatio Nelson vanquished every difficulty, and poured upon them unavoidable destruction.

Early in the action the French admiral was twice wounded, and was at last killed by a cannon-ball. His ship was situated in the hottest part of the battle, and soon after his death it was observed to be on fire. Every effort was made to extinguish the flames; but the engines were destroyed by the shot of the enemy, and every attempt was ineffectual. The flames blazed dreadfully amid the smoke of the battle and the darkness of the night. The fear of the fire extending to the neighbouring ships,

both of the French and the British, heightened the terror of the scene, and every mind was suspended in the alarming solicitude of doubtful expectation. The anxiety of the fleets was not wholly engrossed by the flames of the ship, for much was to be feared from the explosion of so much gunpowder as a vessel of that size might naturally be supposed to contain. The fire made its appearance before ten o'clock at night, and in less than an hour the catastrophe drew nigh, and the ship *l'Orient* was blown to pieces.

It is impossible to conjecture what evils it occasioned, for the darkness of the scene concealed the horror, and the depths of the sea received the victims. Upon the death of Admiral Brueys, Gantheaume succeeded to the command; and, in the midst of the danger, he escaped to another vessel and was saved. The battle lasted, with occasional intervals, from sunset, on August the first, till about noon on the following day,

when there was not a vessel of the French fleet which was not either taken or destroyed, excepting two sail of the line, the *Guillaume Tell* and the *Genereaux*, together with two frigates, the *Diana* and *La Justice*. Captain Hood, in the *Zealous*, sailed in pursuit of the vessels which escaped ; but a signal ordered him to return, for the disabled state of the British fleet did not permit Sir Horatio Nelson to support him with such a force as would have been necessary to render the chase effectual. So dreadful were the effects of the late engagement, that the bay of Abukir was covered with wreck, the beach was strewn with the bodies of the dead, and the vessels which were not destroyed were yet so severely damaged that for two days they lay inactive, like hulks upon the water.

Here Admiral Nelson had an opportunity presented for a display of that energy and effective zeal which pervade his conduct and distinguish his character. Having properly taken care of the sick

and wounded, he refitted his own fleet, repaired such of the French vessels as could be made fit for service, and set fire to the rest. There were several frigates and transport vessels in the old harbour of Alexandria which he was anxious to take or destroy ; but we have already found, that ships of war could not enter the ports of that city, and therefore, before he set sail for Europe, he left Commodore Hood with four ships of the line and five frigates, to block up the harbours of Alexandria and the mouths of the Nile. According to terms of agreement, the sick and wounded French, together with the prisoners, were sent to the city of Alexandria. The whole number which were thus disposed of was 3,100, and 800 of those were wounded. Among the multitudes which were killed in battle, the French, besides their admiral, had to lament the death of Casa-Banca, and several other officers of rank and distinction. The British

lost Captain Westcott, and fifteen other officers. Two hundred and two seamen and marines were killed, and 677 persons were wounded.

The flag of Admiral Brueys was burnt, or otherwise destroyed, by the conflagration, or the blowing up, of the ship *L'Orient* ; but the flag of Admiral Blanquet, who was second in command, fell into the hands of Sir Horatio Nelson ; and the sword of that French officer was sent as a present to the city of London. The highest sentiments of admiration and gratitude to the officers and men pervaded the British nation. The court of common council deposited the sword of Admiral Blanquet in the most conspicuous part of their chamber, and voted a sword of two hundred guineas value to be given, with their warmest thanks, to the hero of the Nile. The parliament joined the general cry of approbation, and the king was pleased to create Sir Horatio Nelson a peer of

Great Britain, by the stile and title of Baron Nelson of the Nile, and Burnham-Thorpe in the county of Norfolk.^m He was also honoured with additional armorial bearings, in allusion to the splendid victory which he obtained on the coast of Egypt. Upon hearing of the British triumph at Abukir, the whole city of Constantinople was filled with joy. So much enraptured was the grand signior at the defeat of the French in Egypt, that, in the emotions of his joy, he plucked a diamond aigrette from one of his most costly turbans, and set it apart for the victorious admiral. To this chelenk, or plume of triumph, was added a peliss of sable fur, with broad sleeves. Two thousand sequins were also given to be distributed among the sailors and marines of the British fleet; and, as a mark of the highest respect, Sir Sidney Smith, the British plenipotentiary at the court of Constantinople,

^m He was afterwards made a viscount.

was requested to go on board a Turkish frigate, and convey the presents to Admiral Nelson.^b

Thus the schemes of France had received a deep blow, and the current of their victories was stopped in its course. So unfortunate a project would, in any situation of the republic, have damped the spirits of the people; but in the distracted state of the French nation, at that period of its history, so disastrous an event was calculated to increase its confusion, and augment its dangers. The reigning powers, being weak and unpopular, were scarcely able to withstand the shock which the news of an enterprise, so unfortunate and calamitous, would unavoidably produce; and another faction, by starting into power, might occasion new changes, and prolong the horrors of revolutionary movements. Bonaparte was not indifferent

^b Intercepted letters N^o. 30, 31, 32; and New Ann. Regist. principal occur. for the year 1798.

to the fate of his own character ; he had fought successfully with the armies of France, and was then the favourite hero of the republic ; but former victories might be forgotten, among the splendid deeds of some new champion, and the verdure of the laurels, which adorned his numerous triumphs, might fall into decay before the blasting influence of the late misfortunes.

Though he was not personally engaged in the fatal contest at Abukir, yet to him was intrusted the care of the expedition, and his fame was unquestionably involved in its failure or success. Conscious of the dangerous situation in which he was placed, Bonaparte endeavoured, with considerable address, to remove the blame from himself, and fix it upon Admiral Brueys, who commanded the fleet. It would naturally be asked, why the French fleet did not return to the harbours of Corfu or Malta, since they could not enter the ports of Alexandria, nor occupy a sta-

tion which could protect them from the danger of the British ships? The commander in chief of the French army ascribed to the republican admiral that course of conduct which detained him upon the Egyptian coast, and induced him to anchor in the bay of Abukir. That respectable officer was then dead, and could not repel the ungenerous accusation ; but, in various parts of the intercepted letters, it appears unequivocally evident, that he was commanded, by the express orders of Bonaparte, to remain for a while on that station. Meeting with much opposition in Egypt, it was not deemed expedient to let the means of escaping from the country be taken away ; and perhaps it might be concluded, that the French fleet were in more safety, anchored in line of battle upon the coast of Egypt, than running the chance of encountering the British squadrons at sea.

Such was the perplexing situation in which Bonaparte was placed, when he

received information of the defeat at Abukir. This momentous battle had been fought while the commander in chief was in pursuit of Ibrahim Bey, in his flight to Syria ; and the hero of Italy returned from his expedition in deep distress, and entered Grand Cairo under great depression of spirits. The prospect towards Alexandria was gloomy, and foreboded evil. The British were masters at sea ; Egypt itself was hostile to the French republic ; and every scheme was pregnant with alarm. The resources and firmness of General Bonaparte were now called into vigorous exercise ; and he must either establish his authority in Egypt, or surrender himself and his army to the power of Britain. To put Egypt in a proper posture of improvement and defence, the artists and philosophers who accompanied the French expedition were employed in various works of elegance and utility. A national institute, or academy, was formed at Alexandria ; and its members were usefully

employed in sounding the mouths of the Nile, surveying the lakes and the country, making maps and charts, constructing mills for grinding corn; and, in genera, their attention was turned to many valuable and economical pursuits. In these laudable undertakings, Berthollet, Monge, Andreossi, Nouet, Denon, and many other men of science and ingenuity, were assiduously employed, and Bonaparte himself was a member of the institute.

To retain Egypt in the possession of France, Bonaparte deemed it expedient to establish a new system of government, but he found it requisite to preserve in its form a semblance of the old. Therefore he constituted a divan, consisting of seven members, who were chosen from among the most respectable people of the country. In every province there was to be a French commandant, an aga of the Janizaries, and an intendant, to collect the imposts. The people of the country were invited to

nominate the members of the government; but, as might have been expected, they were really appointed by the French commander in chief; and a military force was prepared to render effectual the measures of state.^c

With quietness, and seeming approbation, the people of Egypt received the new constitution which Bonaparte prescribed; for the terror of his power kept them in awe, but disaffection was lodged deep in their hearts, and they waited for a seasonable conjuncture to discover their sentiments. National and individual habits are not easily overcome; and if prejudice or prepossessions do occasionally obstruct the progress of improvements, yet their influence is valuable, by precluding a disposition toward frequent changes, which would destroy steadfastness, and introduce disorder. Eastern manners are strikingly

^c Berthier's Memoir, p. 53, 54, 55; and Intercepted letters, No. 10; and Appendix, No. 7.

peculiar for the antiquity of their date ; and the people are uncommonly tenacious of the views and habits of their fathers. The changes which Bonaparte introduced were, perhaps, less different from the nature of their own government than the divan of Selim from the constitution of the Borgites ; but the Turkish conqueror exercised a power which the nation could not then resist, whereas the French commander in chief was now placed in a precarious and dangerous situation.

Not only have we found his ships destroyed, or taken, at Abukir, the coast of Egypt guarded, and the Mediterranean sea occupied by the vessels and squadrons of Britain, but Constantinople itself was roused into action, and the grand signior had declared war against the French. While Bonaparte was professing attachment to the interest of the Ottomans in Egypt, Ruffin, the charge d'affaires of the French republic at Constantinople, had denied the inten-

tions of his country upon Egypt, and endeavoured to lull into security the anxieties and fears of the Ottoman court. But the duplicity of that conduct was gradually unfolded; and the wrath of the grand signior was dreadfully displayed. The supreme vizir, Izzed Mohammed, was instantly deposed, and every energy put in motion to repel the invaders from the valuable province of Egypt. Being thus encouraged to hope for deliverance from the power of France, symptoms of discontent, and popular commotions, began to appear at Grand Cairo. The native Egyptians remained neutral, for they had little to hope from any change: the Greeks adhered to the commander in chief, for they had been oppressed by the late government; but the Turks rose in rebellion, and, upon the 21st of October, the whole city of Grand Cairo was in commotion. In attempting to quell the insurrection, the French general, Dupuy, was assassinated, together with other officers, and se-

veral soldiers. The French drums beat to arms, and the streets were scenes of carnage. The artillery poured destruction upon the town, and consternation, accompanied with horror, pervaded the city. Upon the third day tranquillity was restored, and measures were taken to secure peace.*

Upon the 24th of December, General Bonaparte, and several other members of the institute, departed for Suez, with commercial views, relative to the trade of the Red sea, and having returned by the way of Salehiah, he found that Jezzar Pasha was advancing toward Egypt, with numerous troops from Syria.

An attack upon Ahmet Pasha al Jezzar appears to have constituted an original part of the French expedition into the east; and Bonaparte seized the op-

* New Annual Regist. princip. occurrences; and public papers, A. D. 1798; Berthier's memoir, p. 55 and 56; and Denon, vol. i, p. 179, 180, &c. 3

portunity of that chief's hostile movements to fulfil the designs of his court.

Upon the death of the sheik Daher, Jezzar was appointed to the pashalik of S^t. John d'Acre, and having added to that government several of the adjoining countries, he had influence also to combine, with his former appointments, the pashalik of Damascus. Commanding such an extent of territory, he was much connected with the nations of Europe who were engaged in the trade of the Levant, and who had merchants and consuls in the ports of Syria. The commerce of the Mediterranean had excited, for several years, uneasy sensations at Constantinople; and the merchants met with opposition in prosecuting their trade. The aversion of the Ottoman government to christians trading in the east, afforded the avaricious Pasha al Jezzar an opportunity of exposing their commerce to severe exactions.

It is not improbable, that after the re-

volution in France, the agents and merchants of that country might imprudently endeavour to propagate, in Syria, those sentiments of licentious liberty which had distracted their own nation, and which were hostile to the measures of sound government. But whatever were the combined, or immediate reasons, for Jezzar's conduct, we know, that, in the year of our Lord 1791, he drove the French merchants from Acre, and from all the ports of the Levant. Only three days were allowed them to prepare for their departure, and they suffered essentially in the loss of fortune. From year to year applications were made, and remonstrances offered, to obtain redress; but every effort was in vain, for the court of Constantinople are not scrupulous about violence and extortion; and their authority, although interposed, might have had little influence with Ahmet Jezzar. He had not then threatened to withdraw his allegiance from the Ottoman court; but he was too powerful to be forced into compliance with

any command of the grand signior. To chastise this proud governor, and take vengeance for the injuries he had done to the merchants and honour of France, Bonaparte had constantly directed his eye towards Syria and Al Jezzar.^b

It was upon the 1st of September that the grand signior declared war against the republic of France ; and an army, under the command of the grand vizier, was to cross the straits of Constantinople, traverse Asia Minor, and join Al Jezzar in Syria. A fleet was to be sent into the Levant, to co-operate with the army on land, and, by compact with the British government, Sir William Sidney Smith, with a few vessels belonging to his own nation, was to have an important command in naval affairs. In autumn, Sir Sidney Smith had left Portsmouth, on-board the *Tigre* of 84 guns, and a squadron of Turkish vessels was ready, before the end of September,

^b Volney, tom. ii, ch. 29, 30 ; Baldwin's *Political Reflections*, London, 8vo, A. D. 1802 ; and Browne's *Travels*, ch. 23.

to sail for the Dardanelles; and yet it was not till the beginning of February that Sir Sidney appeared off the coast of Alexandria, and bombarded the city and the vessels in the harbour.

The news of this event were carried to General Bonaparte, at Grand Cairo, upon the eve of his departure into the province of Syria. The account could not fail to agitate his mind, and damp his confidence, but his personal presence could be of little avail, and he had higher objects to pursue in Syria. Though the communication with Alexandria was blocked up, by the Rosetta branch of the Nile, yet he had opened the canal which leads from Ramanjah to that ancient city; and thus provisions, and every thing necessary, could be conveyed to Alexandria from Grand Cairo. As the efforts of Commodore Hood, even when joined with some Turkish and Russian vessels, had made little impression upon the ports and city of Alexandria, so the French commander in chief concluded, that the efforts of Sir

Sidney Smith would be attended with little more effect, and that his principal object was to produce a diversion at the point of Alexandria, and prevent the French army from marching in force toward Syria.

So slow are the movements of the imperfectly-organized government of the Turks, that the grand army, which was to pass through Syria into Egypt, was but yet assembling in the neighbourhood of Scutari. Sir Sidney Smith was apprehensive that the appearance of the French army, while Jezzar was unsupported, would strike them with terror, and disconcert the scheme of recovering Egypt, and therefore he sailed for S^t. John d'Acre, with the Tigre and the two frigates Theseus and Alliance. From the beginning of January, A. D. 1799, parties of the French army had been approaching the borders of Syria, for the whole were not ready to march in a body; and it was also necessary to send them in divisions, and by different

routes, that they might with greater ease obtain a regular supply of food and water.

The infantry amounted to 10,000 men, and were composed of the divisions of Kleber, Bon, Lannès, and Ragnier; but, besides these, there were cavalry, artillery, engineers, and guides, so that, independent of those who drove the mules, camels, and dromedaries, the whole multitude exceeded in number 12,000. Desaix was ordered to follow the army of Murad Bey into Upper Egypt, and to use his best efforts for bringing him into subjection. Marmont was intrusted with the command of Alexandria; Menou was left at Rosetta; Degua remained at Grand Cairo; and for every department an officer of rank and distinction was appointed. Upon the 10th of February, Bonaparte left Cairo to join his army; and, upon the 17th of the same month, he arrived at Al Arish, which was the appointed place of rendezvous. This village and fort

were occupied by 2,000 of Jezzar's troops, but, before the arrival of the commander in chief, it had been invested by the divisions of Regnier and Kleber. The soldiers under the command of the former general marched privately, during the night of February the 14th, toward a body of Mamlukes who were protecting a supply of provisions for the Syrian army at Al Arish. They had arrived upon the 13th of February, and took a strong position, which they deemed impregnable.

Thus, while they were waiting for a favourable moment to throw provisions into the town and fort, the French, in the silence of the night, turned the steep ravine, which the violence of occasional torrents had formed, and which the corps of Mamlukes had chosen for their safety and protection. The camp was taken, and a considerable quantity of provisions and warlike stores, together with a number of camels and horses, fell into the possession of the victorious

French. Not a few of the Mamlukes were killed, and two beys, with several persons of rank, fell amid the horrors of that night. This event, pernicious to the cause of Jezzar, struck terror into the troops of Al Arish. Upon the third day after this important engagement, Bonaparte made his appearance at the scene of action, and was joined by the remaining part of the army which then arrived.

Upon the next day the French took a favourable position upon the hills of sand, between the village and the sea: they quickly made a breach in a tower of the fort, and commanded the garrison to surrender. Discouraged by the loss which they had sustained in the camp of the Mamlukes, and overawed by the numbers and power of the French army, the troops of Al Jezzar listened to terms of capitulation, and, in the course of two days, surrendered the village and fort. The terms which were granted to the besieged were, protection to the

peaceable inhabitants, and liberty for the soldiers, after having laid down their arms, to retire across the desert to the city of Bagdad.^a The army of the French were now to push forward toward the place of their destination, and were ordered to march in divisions to Kan Jones, the ancient Rhinocorura, which is a frontier village of Palestine. The division of Kleber, being the advance guard, was intentionally led astray by the guides, and those of General Bon and Lannes, following the same route, were also misled, and deceitfully drawn from the true road. Regnier's division was left to put Al Arish in a proper state of defence, and, after an interval of two days, to follow the army as the rear guard.

General Bonaparte, with his staff and a small escort, arrived at Kan Jones by the direct road, and were utterly astonished that no division of the army had

^a Berthier's Memoir, p. 61, 62, &c.

either reached it before them or were then in view. Suspecting the cause of this disappointment and delay, Bonaparte turned into the desert, and compelled some Arabs to assist him in finding out the army, who had been exposed to much unnecessary fatigue, and had suffered considerably from the scarcity of water. When the French drew nigh Kan Jones, the Mamluke corps of Abdallah fell back towards Gaza. No artifice of the French commanders could bring the forces of the enemy to an engagement; and when the army of the republic arrived at Gaza, they found it deserted, and open for their reception. Valuable supplies of every thing necessary were found at their disposal in the town; and the people were invited to resume their habitations with confidence and peace. Two days were spent in arranging the government of the town, and, upon the 28th of February, the French army marched toward Jaffa.

After passing a long tract of barren

sands, they had been delighted with the verdant plains of Gaza, and the diversified prospect of the Syrian hills ; but they were now launching again into the discouraging expanse of a dreary desert. They were supplied with provisions which they had found in Gaza ; but their march was painful, and their progress slow. Having refreshed themselves at Ezdude, Ramla, and Lidda, the advance guard sat down before Jaffa upon the 3^d of March. The divisions of General Bon and Lannes were appointed to invest the town, while General Kleber was ordered to cover the siege on the side toward Acre, by posting himself, with the cavalry and his own division, upon the banks of the river Lahoya. At day-break, upon the 6th of March, the cannon began to play upon the town, and, in the course of a few hours, a practicable breach was made in the wall. The French entered within the works, and the conflict was dreadful. The army of Bonaparte lost several men,

and Lejeune, a distinguished officer, was killed in the attack. The garrison, which consisted of several thousand men, refused to lay down their arms, and a dreadful slaughter ensued. Many pieces of artillery were found in Jaffa, and several small trading vessels were seized and secured in the harbour. Here, as well as every where among his conquests in the east, the commander in chief constituted a divan; and, having appointed Gresier to the command of the town, he prepared the army to march for Acre.

As they approached Zeta, upon the 25th of March, they beheld the forces of Abdallah in a strong position upon the heights of Corsum. He was supported by an army of 10,000 Turks, and their object was to insnare the French among the mountains of Naplusium, or Samaria, and in some measure their end was obtained. The divisions of Bon and Kleber put the enemy's cavalry to flight, and Lannes, with the soldiers under his command, also dispersed the forces of

Abdallah on the right; but, pursuing them too far among the mountains, he and his party were bewildered among the passes, and suffered from the enemy, who knew the defiles.^b

The French army marched by Cæsaria towards St. John d'Acre, and, about the close of the evening, arrived at the banks of a river which could not easily be forded, and which winds slowly through a tract of marshy land, at no great distance from the town. But a bridge was constructed, and other preparations were made, during the silent season of the night; and, though Jezzar was in force on the opposite side of the river, yet, upon the following morning, the army of Bonaparte sustained little injury in passing over.

As the battering cannon could not be dragged across the desert from Egypt, Vice-admiral Perée had been ordered to have them conveyed by sea from

^b Berthier's Memoir, p. 69, 70, &c.

Alexandria to Jaffa. This was a necessary, but hazardous attempt, for ships of Britain and Constantinople were cruizing in the Levant. The knowledge of this design was communicated to Sir Sidney Smith, and he stationed the *Theusus* off Jaffa to intercept the convoy. The flotilla, which consisted of a corvette and nine gun-boats, was first seen from the Tigre itself, and the crew of that ship took seven of the smaller vessels as they were doubling a point of land near Mount Carmel. Thus the French were disappointed of the artillery which they expected; and Bonaparte issued orders for sending him the battering cannon which had been left at Damietta. In the meantime, the commander in chief took possession of an eminence which commanded the town of Acre; and, upon the 20th of March, he opened trenches upon the east side of the city, and within a few yards of the wall.

As Bonaparte approached St. John

d'Acre, the Pasha al Jezzar was upon the point of leaving the city, with his women and effects, for the triumphs of the French had made him afraid ; but he was encouraged and kept at his post by the advice and assistance of Sir Sidney Smith. This enterprising officer had sent to S^t. John d'Acre, Colonel Philipeaux, who had continued in his favour and interest since he assisted him to escape from the prison of the Temple in Paris, and, at the same time, also Captain Miller of the Theseus went to the aid of Al Jezzar. These two experienced and active engineers exerted their best abilities to put the town in a proper state of defence ; but, upon the ninth day of the siege, a breach was made in one of the towers, though the French batteries were only supplied with field pieces ; for the walls were not strong, and the defence of the town was precarious. They had also driven a mine, in order to blow up the counterscarp, but, when sprung with the highest expectations of success,

it was found to have been deficient, and did little more than slightly injure the glacis.

The French army, being elated with their victory at Jaffa, sprung into the breach ; and, being repulsed with great loss, Malli, with two other officers, was killed in the attack. Some battering cannon had been brought to Jaffa, which was the French depository for the military stores, but they could not be transported to Acre, on account of the British ships which were stationed in their way. The town and harbour of Caiffa were indeed possessed by the French, and Lambert, who was intrusted with the command, had annoyed the squadron of Sir Sidney Smith ; but still the ships of this commodore had the command of the sea. Deprived as General Bonaparte was of a necessary supply of more powerful artillery, he continued to push on the siege, and made another effort to enter the town, but still the attempt was as unsuccessful as it was dangerous.

The equinoctial gales being over, and no enemy at sea able to annoy him, Sir Sidney Smith anchored in the road of St. John d'Acre. The situation of that place was such as to stand in need of his immediate assistance, and in the hazardous enterprises of the siege the marines and sailors of his squadron readily, and with eagerness engaged: They joined the Turkish garrison, who were under the command of Al Jezzar, and, with united courage, a vigorous sally was made from the fort. The grand object was to destroy the mine which the French were pushing forward with so much danger to the town. The Turkish forces, with native courage, but not with sufficient silence, approached the works of the enemy before the dawn of day, and fought with considerable effect. The British entered the mine, discovered its direction, and damaged the works; but this important service was performed at great expence. Among the wounded were Lieutenant Wright,

who commanded the pioneers, Lieutenant Beattie of the marines, and Mr. Janverin, a midshipman of the Tigre. Among those who were killed was Major Oldfield of the marines, whose skill and services were highly valuable, and who, at the taking of the Cape of Good Hope, was the first man who entered the works.^d

When Ibrahim Bey fled from Egypt, he took the route of Damascus; and by his instigations, together with the influence of Al Jezzar, the whole regions of Syria were in commotion. While the French were carrying on the siege of S^t. John d'Acre, corps of Mamlukes appeared in force, large parties of troops, in the interest of Constantinople, were passing the river Jordan, and the Arabs were assembling in vast numbers among the mountains of Samaria, and upon the

^d Berthier's Memoir, p. 82, 83, &c. ; and New Annual Register; Sir Sidney Smith's letter, April 7th; Principal occurrences, A. D. 1799.

heights of Lubi. General Junot, who occupied the posts of Saffet and Nazareth, was in imminent danger from the increasing numbers of the enemy, and Kleber was sent with his division to support him. This general pursued his route by Nazareth, and when under the height of Sed-Jara, in the neighbourhood of Lubi and Cana, the enemy in multitudes rushed into the plain, but were put to flight, and driven with precipitation across the Jordan.

Upon the 11th of April, the desultory forces which were threatening the French invaders assembled from all points toward the neighbourhood of Mount Tabor; and imagination, combined with fear, having magnified their numbers, stated them at 40,000 or 50,000. So vast an army on the plains of Esdrelon, or Fuli, created in the breast of Bonaparte the most serious alarms. He was aware of the danger which such numerous hosts might occasion, if they approached the vicinity of S^t. John d'Acre,

and therefore he resolved to meet them at a distance and give them battle.

Leaving the divisions of Regnier and Lannes to carry forward the siege, he departed from Acre upon the 15th of April, and proceeded to the assistance of General Kleber and Junot. He had in his party the division of Bon, eight field-pieces, and that part of the cavalry which had not already been sent toward the streams of the Jordan. Upon the morning of the following day, he arrived at the heights of Fuli, and saw General Kleber surrounded by a number of cavalry, which must have exceeded 20,000; and various parties of the enemy were hovering at a distance in different directions.

In this critical situation the commander in chief adopted the most decisive measures. Rampon was sent, with a large reinforcement, to the assistance of Kleber; Le Turq was dispatched, with the cavalry under his command, to attack a body of Mamlukes; and General

Vial was commanded to assume a post upon the mountains, which might prevent the enemy from taking refuge among their defiles, so that in every situation the most active arrangements were made. When the proper dispositions were completed, the appointed signal of discharging an eight pounder was promptly given, and the report inspired Kleber with additional vigour. He rushed into the village of Fuli, defeating a number of the enemy; and being joined by the reinforcements, he attacked the main body of the Turkish forces and put them to flight. But their retreat was difficult, for General Murat had occupied the bridge of Jacob, which is over the Jordan near the lake Tabaria, and the position of Vial prevented them from taking shelter among the mountains of Naplusium. Moreover, a considerable body of infantry was so placed as to prevent an escape toward Jenin, where their magazines were established.

In this situation of difficulty and despair, they threw themselves behind Mount Tabor, and, in their flight toward Damascus, crossed the waters of Jordan at the bridge of Giz al Mecani. Of these bridges, and some adjoining strong holds, Kleber got complete possession, while Bonaparte and the soldiers who were with him rested upon their arms, and waited in readiness for further exertions. But the enemy durst not return, and the apprehension of another attack was thus removed. Never was the influence of order and military tactics more conspicuously displayed than they were in those rencounters which had recently taken place between the French and Turkish armies. Kleber, with a comparative handful of men, formed a square, and resisted for a time the repeated attacks of numerous bands. When encouraged by reinforcements, though the whole of his troops could not amount to 5,000 men, yet he defeated collected armies of 10,000 infantry, and more than twice that num-

ber of cavalry. They were well acquainted too with the country, and had all the advantages of a far-extended line of battle, as well as numerous detached parties among the defiles and strong holds of the mountains. The reliance which Bonaparte had on Kleber does not appear to have been misplaced, for on every occasion he acted wisely, and in this expedition his judgment and dexterity were equally conspicuous. Every person who was intrusted with a command appears to have done his duty ; and Bonaparte returned to Acre rejoicing in his success.

The siege was renewed with vigour, and, in the evening of April the 25th, another attempt was made to enter the town. A lodgment was effected in the lower part of one of the towers ; but the men were annoyed by combustibile materials from above ; and, by the vigorous exertions of the besieged, the whole attack proved abortive. Under the direction of the British engineers, ravelins,

at great hazard, were formed without the wall of the town, at each end of the enemy's nearest lines, and thus their operations were greatly disconcerted. A counter mine was wrought, to destroy the effect of those preparations which the French had made to blow up the counterscarp at a new breach in the wall; but the greatest impediment to the progress of the French arose from the fire of the British vessels, which were so stationed, in the road of St. John d'Acre, that they held the besiegers in considerable check. The Tigre was moored on one side, and the Theseus on the other, so that the cross fire of both flanked the walls of the town, and spread desolation among the enemy's troops. The gun-boats, launches, and other vessels, which could be easily moved by oars, were also mounted with light pieces of artillery, which were employed to great advantage in disconcerting the French. An eighteen pounder, in the Lighthouse castle, and one of greater

caliber, upon the north ravelin, were wrought with considerable effect; and the management of those guns, both by sea and land, was committed to Lieutenants Brody and Atkinson, Messrs. Joes, Scroder, Jones, and Bray, who all belonged to the Tigre and Theseus.

Upon the 7th of May a fleet of thirty sail made its appearance. They were the ships which Hassan Bey commanded, and which were appointed to have joined the squadron of Sir Sidney Smith off the coast of Alexandria; but the circumstances of the war had altered their destination, and they were commanded to sail for Acre. If their appearance communicated fresh spirits to Al Jezzar and Sir Sidney Smith; it affected the French commander in chief with increased anxiety, and filled him with mad resolution. Time after time had he endeavoured to storm the town of St. John d'Acre, till the ninth and last attempt completed the measure of the murderous exploits. The crews of the Turkish

vessels were armed with pikes, and led by Sir Sidney Smith to the defence of the town. The troops of Hassan Bey were introduced within the walls, and, in the height of the danger, Al Jezzar was persuaded, by the British commodore, to vanquish so far the common prejudices of the east, as to throw open the garden gates of the seraglio, and introduce a Turkish regiment to assist the Albanian guards, whom the severities of the siege had greatly reduced in number.

While the conflict was dreadful in the breach, a sortie was made from the town, and on all sides the French were exposed to violent attacks and obstinate resistance. The division of Kleber, which had been recalled from the banks of the Jordan, was not able to triumph with its usual success; General Lannes was wounded, and several officers were killed. Caffarelli had lately died of his wounds; and now the French had also to lament the similar fate of General

Bon. In the mingled multitude of combatants, the newly arrived Turks did not accurately distinguish between the uniform of the French and the naval dress of the British: many a sturdy stroke was to be parried by the friends of Al Jezzar; and the valuable life of Colonel Douglas, as well as several other British officers, was frequently exposed to danger. So hopeless had the attempts of the French now become, that the persevering efforts of their commander in chief were rather the effects of frantic disappointment than rational zeal. But at length discontentment was visible in his army; the best troops refused to march into certain destruction, and after a siege of sixty days he was forced to abandon his views upon S^t. John d'Acre.*

He now began to make secret preparations for withdrawing his army and returning to Grand Cairo. The more

* Berth. Mem. p. 113, &c.; New Ann. Reg. A. D. 1799, principal occur.; letter of Sir Sidney Smith, May 9,

effectually to conceal his intention of departing, Bonaparte continued to fire incessantly upon the town, and took precautions in the night time to prepare the way for a safe escape. Having previously removed the sick and wounded, the whole army secretly retired, at nine o'clock in the evening of May the 20th, and it was not till the morning that Jezzar was made acquainted with their departure. Upon the fourth day of their march they arrived at Jaffa, and having burnt the carriages, and sunk in the sea, or buried in the sand, twenty-three pieces of heavy artillery, they put the howitzers and small cannon on board some small vessels at Jaffa, and ordered them to be conveyed to Egypt, along with 2,000 wounded soldiers, who were unfit to travel by land. These arrangements soon attracted the notice, and called forth the exertions of Sir Sidney Smith.

The battering cannon, which the French had attempted to conceal,

were recovered, and easily made fit for use; and the vessels with the sick and wounded were taken at sea, and sent to Damietta; but the advantage of this capture was to the sick and wounded themselves. Embarked in vessels which scarcely had sailors sufficient to navigate them, and in want of every comfort and convenience, they were cast upon British compassion, and every humane assistance was granted. As the French army marched along the coast of Syria, they were exposed to the fire of several ships which were ordered to annoy them. Troops of cavalry were sent to harass their rear, and bands of Arabs frequently attacked them. The weak and the slightly wounded, who had been ordered to march with the army, were overpowered by the fatigues of the journey, and the desert was strewn with bodies of the dead. From Acre to Jaffa they destroyed the produce of the fields, burnt the villages, and marked their route by desolation. If these ravages had

been confined to the districts which bordered upon Acre and Jaffa the violence might have been ascribed, partly to a temporary frenzy of disappointment, and partly to a severe exercise of precaution, that, by destroying the means of comfort and support, the enemy might be prevented from pursuing them in their retreat. But how shall we frame an apology for those cruelties which they committed towards Gaza, and the confines of Egypt, when the flames and the smoke proclaimed at a distance their approach ?

Upon the 2^d of June the army halted at Al Arish, and having strengthened the defence of the frontier towns, they recruited their forces as they marched through Egypt ; and, upon the 14th of the same month, arrived at Grand Cairo. Although the forces which returned from Syria made a better appearance than could have been expected, yet their ranks were thinned, and they had suffered much from climate

and fatigue. Sensible of their situation, the commander in chief endeavoured to recruit their strength, and prepare them for new and périlous engagements.*

In reviewing the siege of St. John d'Acre, we are led back to scenes of ancient military glory, where many princes of Europe fought in the battles and cause of the crusades. The spot where Bonaparte appeared, in making his last effort to storm the town, was an eminence which still retains the name of Richard Cœur de Lion's mount, in memory of the English king, who acquired great and lasting fame in fighting against Saladin. There the king of England and the monarch of France drew their swords in the christian cause against the Mohammedans ; but now Sir Sidney Smith, the plenipotentiary of the British sovereign, had interested himself deeply with Jezzar, a Mohammedan chief, in resisting the progress of French principles, and

* Berth. Mem. p. 142.

French arms. The Gallic nation, which had borne a most conspicuous part in supporting the cause of kings, and defending the interests of the Holy land, had exchanged the government of princes for the fluctuating and irregular authority of ambitious rulers and contending powers. It had not only changed its ancient forms and manners, but rejected, as we have seen, the very name of christian; and, to obtain its sanguinary ends of conquest, pretended to revere the prophet of Mecca, against whose claims their fathers fought, and to extinguish whose unhallowed flame the best blood of Europe flowed.

Tracing in our memory the paths of Bonaparte's progress, and observing the course of his former uninterrupted success, we are utterly astonished at his failure in Syria, and his humiliating retreat from the walls of Acre. With 10,000 men, of the best troops of France, whose prowess had raised the admiration of Europe, he had only to contend with

a Turkish garrison, not nearly amounting to half the number of his men ; and the town only inclosed by a wall, which could easily be destroyed, and was principally to be distinguished from the fence of a well-protected garden, by the warlike towers, which were built at certain intervals. To this, indeed, was superadded, the direction and assistance of Sir Sidney Smith ; but the resources of this gallant officer were unavoidably few, till within ten days of raising the siege, when the Turkish fleet arrived to support him.

The French ascribed their disappointment at St. John d'Acre to the want of battering cannon, which were seized by Sir Sidney Smith on their way from Alexandria. This loss abstracted a part from their accumulated strength ; but the field pieces which were in their possession, frequently and with readiness made breaches in the slender wall of the town ; and moreover, during the siege, they were supplied with those

heavy pieces of artillery which they attempted to destroy in leaving Acre. We must therefore seek for the principal cause of their failure in other circumstances which attended their situation. Their cruelties at Jaffa sunk deep into the remembrance of the Turks, and the garrison of St. John d'Acre resolved to die rather than surrender. If this resolution and courage proceeded from themselves, they were indebted to Sir Sidney Smith, not only for the intrepid assistance of the marines and sailors, but also for much of that judicious and steady conduct which defied the united efforts of the French troops. The whole operations of Bonaparte were descriptive of vigour and enterprise; but they were marked with precipitation, and more nearly allied to daring courage than prudent counsel.

The success of Lord Nelson, at Abukir, had planted anxieties in the mind of Bonaparte which every successive difficulty tended to multiply and perplex.

The hostile multitudes which abounded toward Damascus and the Jordan were kept in awe, but not subdued ; and they only watched for a favourable opportunity of pouring their hosts upon the French army. The whole of Egypt displayed a spirit of insubordination : British ships of war had arrived in the Arabian gulf ; the Mamlukes were still in great force ; the country about Grand Cairo was a scene of hostile arrangements ; and still Bonaparte looked toward Britain and the sea with fearful apprehensions. Threatened as it were from every point, and looking nowhere without dreadful danger, he rushed against the walls of Acre, with a degree of violence and precipitation which betrayed the uneasy agitations of his mind. Every part of his conquests in the east seemed to call for his presence and aid ; while Acre held him at defiance, and his untoward circumstances contracted the means of bestowing aid where additional power was wanted.

Thus, in a frenzy approaching to despair, he conducted the siege of Acre with an impetuosity and violence which rather seem to have hindered than promoted his success. Every attack was in the full career of fury, by which the coolness of genuine courage was taken away; and the combatants never parted till their strength was exhausted, and scenes of horror had appalled their souls. While the numbers of unburied dead were disgusting to the eye, and productive of disease, a proposal was made by Bonaparte for granting a truce, till those victims of war and human passions should be removed, and decently interred. But the eager violence of the contest did not permit the humane and necessary measure to be carried into effect. The French complain that the flag of truce was not respected; and Sir Sidney Smith asserts, that the French themselves violated the sacred pledge, and fired upon the town. For the sake of honour and the laws of war, we

would willingly suppose, that neither party acted knowingly in opposition to the necessary rules of an old established covenant. The injury complained of was merely an effect, we trust, of highly irritated jealousy and precipitate conduct, flowing from misconstrued and unintentional appearances.

The bitterness of animosity induced the French commander in chief to charge Sir Sidney Smith with an inhuman and immoral proceeding, in wantonly exposing the prisoners of the republic to the contagion of the plague. That dangerous disease was prevalent in Syria, during the siege of Acre; and if it entered the unavoidably confined situation of the prisoners of war, the character of Sir Sidney Smith, and the known conduct of the British nation, must repel the obloquy and remove every stain. Moreover, that spirited officer, with the indignant feelings of an upright mind, appeals, in his vindication, to M. Lallemand, the aid-de-camp.

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of Bonaparte himself, who had free access to the prisoners on-board the ships. But the assertion carries the confutation in itself, for how were the crew of the ships to be preserved from contagion if the prisoners were infected ; and even the darkness of malice itself could not have induced the British to plot the destruction of the French, at such imminent hazard to themselves.*

Cruelties were undoubtedly committed at S^t. John d'Acre, for the conduct of Al Jezzar was consistent with the practice of the Turks, who estimate the success of war by the number of heads which are produced ; but though the British commodore could not altogether prevent that inhuman conduct, yet he softened considerably its rigours, by often averting the stroke. Ahmed, the extraordinary person, who was go-

* Berth. Mem. p. 120, &c. ; and New Ann. Reg. principal occur. ; letter of Sir Sidney Smith, May 30, A. D. 1799.

vernor at Acre during the time of the siege, appears to have drawn his first breath in Bosnia. By some untoward circumstances he was carried as a slave into Egypt, but he rose to notice and consequence in the house of Ali Bey. That ambitious chief was then aspiring to sovereign power, and Ahmed was a valuable agent in accomplishing his schemes. His coolness and intrepidity fitted him for scenes of danger, and his unfeeling mind permitted him frequently to bathe his hands in blood. In ascending to power, the beys not only committed open violence, but practised means of secret guilt ; and in these deceitful works of darkness Ahmed was so often employed, that he received the name of Al Jezzar, or the cut-throat.

Unbounded ambition frequently destroys the finer feelings of the mind ; and Ali Bey, in the career of his selfish pursuits, resolved to sacrifice his friend and patron Saleh Bey. Ahmed Al Jezzar was appointed to assassinate this

Mamluke chief; but for some cause, which is not sufficiently known, he declined the bloody task. Mohammed Bey, whose ingratitude and ambition have already been described, gratified his patron Ali, and secretly employed the deadly poniard. Disapprobation, seeming to indicate a desire of revenge, was seen lowering on the brow of Ali Bey; and Al Jezzar, fleeing from the apprehended danger, took refuge in the city of Constantinople. His military prowess was not a secret; and in the wars of Syria he was employed by the grand signior against the sheik Daher. In the progress of his fortune, he rose to the situation of power and honour where we have already found him; and as Egypt still continued to resist the power of the Ottoman court, though Jezzar had excited the jealousy of Constantinople, yet, for prudent reasons, he was appointed generalissimo of that country, with full orders to bring it into subjection; but in the spring, A. D.

1804, he breathed his last, in the eighty-seventh year of his age.^a

There cannot remain a doubt that Bonaparte felt, in a very sensible degree, his humiliating expulsion from Acre; but he, and the French historians of that siege, affect to believe, that leaving that place unsubdued did not frustrate the main intention of the Syrian expedition. They represent it as having been successful in disconcerting an attack upon their interests, by the combined efforts of the British court, the Sublime Porte, and the discontented parties in Egypt itself. But this deceitful colouring is incapable of disguising the real state of the fact; for we shall soon see the alliance between Britain and Constantinople assuming a vigorous form, and producing important effects. The defeat of Bonaparte at S^t. John d'Acre was the first impression of a

^a Volney, tom. ii, ch. 24; and Scots Magazine and Edin. Lit. Miscel. for A. D. 1804.

powerful impulse, which overthrew the schemes of the French in Egypt, and expelled them from that distracted country.*

The defeat of Bonaparte at S^t. John d'Acre is not to be estimated by the number of troops which he lost, nor by the failure of his schemes upon Egypt; for it appears to have prevented designs of the most gigantic and interesting nature. Though the ships of Britain occupied, and were triumphant in the Red sea, yet, if the French had been successful in Syria, they could have opened an easy passage, by the Persian gulf, to the British possessions in India. If the forces of Bonaparte had made themselves masters of S^t. John d'Acre, the Turkish interest would have been so much weakened, in those distant regions, that the French army, by the terror of its name, might have marched victoriously along the Syrian coast; and, having traversed

* Berth. Mem. p. 140, 141, 142.

Asia Minor, might have sat down in siege before the walls of Constantinople. The French republic does not appear to have been void of hostile designs upon the Turkish dominions in Europe; and though the siege of Constantinople, and the overthrow of the Ottoman government, may not have entered into the original design of the expedition into Egypt, yet it must have been a natural consequence of a French establishment in Syria.

Their success would not only have increased their ambition, but the accessible nature of Constantinople, and its importance in the scale of Europe, could not have failed to expose it as a suitable object to their aggrandizing views. The Turkish empire has extended itself, without a due portion of corresponding vigour, till the original strength of its government has been lost in the vastness of its dominions. Thus, become weak and paralyzed, it has long been ready to fall, and but lingers in its present feeble

condition till the touch of a powerful hand completely overthrow it. The nations of Europe have sometimes dreaded the approach of the Russian monarch ; and, if some unseen arrangements do not interfere, it is highly probable, that, in the process of events, the cold regions of St. Petersburg will be abandoned for the warmer and more genial climate of Constantinople.

What might be the probable consequences to Europe of such a change in its government the most profound politician cannot attempt to describe ; for the effects which would be produced must depend upon many circumstances and arrangements which time alone can unveil. But if France should embrace Constantinople within the arms of its power, the effects upon Europe would be fraught with danger. There might be forms of government, and splendid titles, in its various countries and kingdoms ; but, from the Baltic and, the British channel to the shores of the

Mediterranean, and from Cape Finisterre to the boundaries of the Black sea, no power would be known but the will and commands of France. To disappoint the French, therefore, in their views towards Syria and Egypt, is a cause which embraces a wider range than the policy and interests of Great Britain ; and is deserving of serious notice and combined operations.

Having traced the movements of the French armies, in the lower parts of Egypt, and in Syria, let us now turn our attention to the operations of Desaix, in the regions of Alsaid. Soon after the naval battle of Abukir, and so early as the 25th of August, A. D. 1798, this young and active general was intrusted with the command of a division of troops, which consisted of six battalions, and a proportional number of cavalry. The intention of this appointment was to follow Murad Bey, and subdue that enterprising chief. There was also allotted for this expedition a

few small vessels, to convey supplies for the army up the streams of the Nile. Murad Bey had directed his course toward the province of Arsinoe, or Fayum ; and, in following him to that district, the army of General Desaix was exposed to considerable difficulties. At this time the Nile had widely overflowed its banks, and various canals obstructed the progress of the soldiers. During their march the French army were frequently attacked by flying parties of Arabs and Mamlukes ; but, having reached the canal of Joseph, they were put on-board some small vessels and jerns, and conveyed with difficulty toward Menekiah.

A. D. 1799.—Upon the 3^d of October, Murad Bey, with his army, was discovered in a strong position, upon the heights of Menekiah, and General Desaix made haste to approach and attack him. As he advanced toward the position, his troops were exposed to occasional assaults, and the main body of Murad's

forces seemed to be ready for giving battle; but the cannon played; the horse artillery made deep impressions; and the Mamluke cavalry of Murad fled in disorder. Yet this active and intrepid leader stopped at Lediman to engage the army of Desaix. The troops of Murad Bey, surrounding the division of the French general, which was formed into a square column, and flanked by platoons, attacked it with impetuosity, but were repulsed on all sides. Furious at the firm phalanx, which they could not penetrate, they advanced to the very points of the bayonets, and flung amongst the soldiers those weapons and arms which they had used ineffectually in their hands.

This battle was fought upon the 7th of October, and, after the Mamlukes had been driven from various posts, Murad Bey retired, upon the 8th of the same month, beyond the lakes and canals in the province of Fayum. Both parties suffered much during these conflicts,

and three beys, with several cashephs, were left dead on the field. In the course of a few weeks many dangers were encountered, and, upon the 8th of November, a desultory, but destructive engagement took place in the town of Fayum. The French officers Expert and Sacro were successful over the Fellahs and Arabs; but the troops of Desaix could not overtake the quick moving cavalry of Murad. After frequent retreats, marches and counter-marches, Murad Bey, upon the 17th of December, took his route toward Syene; and, being pursued by General Desaix, he was forced to abandon that situation, and, about the 1st of February, he retired into the deserts of Nubia.*

If it was not safe, and might have been fruitless to pursue the Mamlukes into the dreary wilderness, neither was it expedient for Desaix to remain at

* Berthier's Memoir, p. 157, 158, &c.; and Denon, vol. i, p. 208, 209, &c.

Syene. The French commander had left behind him various detachments, in different parts of the country, to suppress insurrections, and keep open a communication with Grand Cairo; but Murad was successful in stirring up the people to resistance. It was necessary for him to collect the tribute, for without a regular supply of money, his army could not be supported, nor kept from deserting. If it was indispensable for him to collect the taxes, it was also of vast moment to exclude his enemy from the benefit of the tribute. Moving on their fleet horses, therefore, the Mamlukes preceded Desaix, in his route through the country, and left few of the common taxes for him to receive. But the severities of war are always terrible; and even the mildness of a foreign enemy approaches nearly to oppression.

In whatever manner, therefore, the French might conduct themselves among the people, they would naturally be detested, if they demanded money and in-

sisted upon tribute. But the severe and despotic manner in which the cashephs and beys demanded the taxes, in Egypt, afforded an example, which the French troops readily approved, and eagerly followed. They entered a district to demand the taxes, and encamping before the villages and towns, they lived in riot and free quarters, till their demands were answered, and their wants supplied.¹

A. D. 1800.—The Turkish government was not the most engaging for the people of Egypt, and the usurped authority of the beys was not rendered acceptable by mildness and moderation; but the intrusion of the French increased the evil, and they were every where exposed to hatred and vengeance. Their dangers too were heightened in Upper Egypt, by the Arabs of Yeman, who had crossed the Red sea, at Cossir, and

¹ Denon, vol. i, p. 200, 201.

penetrated in hostile array, to the very banks of the Nile. The sherifs of Arabia had been invited, by Murad Bey, to assist in suppressing the French, who were infidels, and enemies to the laws and precepts of their friend and predecessor, the prophet of Mecca. Thus we observe, how justly insincerity and falsehood expose to ignominy, or lead to punishment. At the expence of truth, and in defiance of decorum, Bonaparte, the French commander in chief, issued a proclamation, at which apathy itself should have raised a blush. To serve sinister purposes, and promote the ends of aggrandizement, we have found him an avowed disciple of the Mohammedan faith; but his duplicity was easily detected by barbarians themselves, and he was exposed to the shame of deceit, and the punishment of unjust pretensions.

In the distracted state of Upper Egypt, Desaix left Syene and returned to Esnab, the ancient Latopolis. In these

regions he had to contend with the numerous enemies who had risen up against him; for mutual danger had united the jarring interests of rival beys, and we find Hassan, of the house of Ali, espousing the same cause with his determined enemy Murad Bey. Hassan had formerly been governor at Jidda, and from that appointment was surnamed Jiddaui. It was he and Ismael, who, upon the death of Mohammed Bey, contended for the superiority with Ibrahim and Murad. Being the less fortunate and successful of the competitors, Hassan and his companion Ismael retired into Upper Egypt, and there they remained in considerable strength.

Ismael was advanced in years, at the time of Ali's death, and as he does not appear upon the field of the present contest, it is highly probable, that he had already finished his career and paid the debt of nature. Even Hassan Jiddaui had now descended far into the vale of life, and felt the pressure of age; but the

nerves of his arm became strong, when he rose to subdue the invaders of Egypt. A succession of battles ensued, at various places, on both sides of the Nile; but it was the interest, as well as the intention, of the Arabs and Mamlukes to avoid general actions, and to harass the French troops by constant marches, in the trying circumstances of an inhospitable and foreign climate. While Desaix, and several of the generals under his command, were dispersed, with their respective detachments, to watch the motions of the enemy at Kenah, Siut, and other places upon the Nile, the Mamlukes collected themselves in strength at Syene, and Renaud was sent to disperse them. Here they found it expedient to make an obstinate resistance; and in this engagement the Mamlukes felt severely the superiority of the French arms.

Many of them were strewn lifeless upon the field of battle: Hassan and Osman Bey were much wounded, and Selim fell by their side. The Arabs, who had

joined the cause of the Mamlukes, suffered much in this contest ; and three of the sheiks fell a sacrifice to their valour. There were now two objects, which chiefly engaged the attention of General Desaix. The first was the pursuit of Murad, who had retired to El-wah, and was suspected of a design to return toward Grand Cairo, and join the insurgents, who had lately disquieted the French government, in the lower parts of Egypt. The second design, which occupied the views of Desaix, was an expedition to Cossir, for the purpose of seizing upon that town and fort. This enterprise was considered by him as a matter of no small moment, inasmuch as it appeared to be the most effectual method of crushing the Arabs of Yeman, who had entered Egypt and opposed the interests of the French. But he was peculiarly anxious to take possession of Cossir, because a British force had appeared in the Arabian gulf ; and because additional ships and troops were

expected from the settlements of that nation in India.

It was upon the 29th of May that General Belliard and Citizen Donzelot entered Cossir, and took possession of the town and fort. After staying two days, and making some necessary arrangements, a garrison was left to defend it, and the rest of the detachment returned to Kenah. It was about this time, that General Bonaparte retreated from Syria; and soon afterwards Ibrahim Bey appeared with considerable forces in the neighbourhood of Gaza. Desaix was left in Upper Egypt, to preserve and enlarge the French conquests in that part of the country. General Le Grange left Grand Cairo, to oppose the bands of Mamlukes, who were descending from Upper Egypt, to join Ibrahim upon the plains of Gaza. He surprised a large party, as they were passing Sababiar, and totally overthrew them. Bonaparte himself marched, with a chosen body of men, toward the

pyramids of Giza, to meet and oppose the progress of Murad Bey ; but that Mamluke chief had left Giza, upon the day that the commander in chief arrived, and he fled from the French troops into the province of Fayum.*

At this critical juncture of affairs, information was conveyed to Bonaparte, that a large fleet of Turkish vessels had arrived in the bay of Abukir, and that a numerous army, under the command of Mustapha Pasha, having landed on the shore, were assuming a hostile form upon the peninsula. The troops of Constantinople got possession, by assault, of the small fort of Abukir ; and, having furnished it with a garrison, the rest of the army were disposed of, in two lines, across the peninsula. Their right was toward the sea shore, and their left reached the banks of the lake Abukir. The whole army, thus arranged, were

* Berthier's Memoir, p. 199, 200, &c. and Denon, vol. iii, p. 154, 155.

placed in a position of great strength; but instead of amounting to 15 or 17,000 men, they do not appear to have exceeded 8 or 9,000.

Here was a point of great danger, which must be attacked with vigour, or Egypt must be lost. The arrival of a Turkish army, so numerous, was calculated to give spirit to every internal foe; and the different bands of enemies, who had hitherto baffled subjugation, would therefore be ready to rise in renewed strength, and from all quarters ruin might be poured upon the armies of France. This foreboding prospect was rendered still darker, and more pregnant with alarm, when Sir Sidney Smith was viewed in connection with the plan of attack. It was not to be supposed, that an officer of his vigour and enterprise would remain inactive among so many movements of heroism and danger. His success at S^t. John d'Acre would naturally stir him up to further pursuits of victory, and who knew but he had his

station among those very ships which brought the Turkish army to the coast of Abukir.

But the French commander in chief, whose courage and resolution never forsook him, determined upon an instant trial of strength and fortune. Having given the necessary directions for protecting the other parts of Egypt, and having commanded Kleber to advance to Rosetta, he enjoined such generals as were not otherwise employed to meet him in a specified time at Ramaniah. Upon the 20th of July, the commander in chief marched toward the peninsula of Abukir, and encamped at the village of Birket. Being uncertain of the immediate designs of Mustapha Pasha, Bonaparte chose this situation, that he might be equally ready to oppose him, whether he attempted a passage up the Rosetta branch of the Nile, or determined to make an attack upon the city of Alexandria.

Perceiving that the Turks made no

movement, either for battle or departure, Bonaparte fixed his head quarters in the city of Alexandria, and collected a numerous army at the wells between that town and Fort Abukir. Upon the 25th of July 1799 the French were early under arms, and, by break of day, marched to attack the Turkish lines. General Lannes commanded the right, Lannusse the left, and the division of General Kleber, which was not yet arrived, was appointed to form the reserve. The advance guard was commanded by General Murat, and consisted of 400 cavalry, three battalions of infantry, and two field pieces. The park of artillery, in the rear, was protected by a detachment of the army, and the communication with Alexandria was kept open by a corps of soldiers mounted upon dromedaries.

Both wings of the Turkish army were attacked at once, by squadrons detached in advance, and General Murat, with his cavalry, rushed upon the centre. The

whole first line was thrown into confusion, and completely routed. The second was subjected to a similar fate; and most of the Turkish army were either killed on the field of battle, or drowned in attempting to escape to their ships. The fort of Abukir continued to resist, yet in the course of a few days it was reduced to a heap of ruins, and the garrison surrendered. But a victory so complete could not be gained without a vast expence of valuable lives; and the field of battle became a cemetery, fully occupied with the bodies of the dead. There the French were mingled with the Turks, in that place of silence where the din of war is not heard, and where the friend and the foe rest in peace.

In subduing the Turks, the French were called forth to severe trials of courage and skill. The Ottoman soldiers displayed that native valour which has often distinguished their countrymen; and they were so flanked and defended that nothing but superior forces, or passing military skill,

could have dislodged them from their position, or overcome them in battle. The right of the first line was supported by 1,000 men, posted upon an adjoining sand-hill, and the whole was strengthened by at least an equal number of soldiers, who were entrenched in a neighbouring village. Upon the left, nearly 2,000 men were stationed upon one of those hills of sand, which are common upon the peninsula of Abukir, as well as in the deserts of Egypt, where the whirlwinds blow, and heaps of sand are tossed. A few gun boats were so placed upon the shore, that they flanked and protected the space between the lines. Besides the general strength of its position, the second line was defended by a redoubt connected with the centre; and yet French bravery and French skill triumphed over every difficulty, and procured additional laurels of victory and success.^a

^a Berthier's Memoir, p. 217, 218, &c; and Denon, vol. ii, p. 240, 241,

After gaining so complete a triumph, the commander in chief surveyed the works of Alexandria, and then returned to the city of Grand Cairo. In this capital of Egypt, General Bonaparte made those public and private arrangements which the circumstances of the country seemed to require, and which the nature of his schemes led him to adopt. The severities which were exercised by the provisional government, and the successful efforts which had lately been made by the French troops, had struck terror into the people, and produced a temporary calm. But the taxes were ill paid, and the soldiers murmured for want of money and necessary supplies. This tranquillity of the country, however, was fondly received as a token of obedience and prosperity, or it was dexterously held forth as a mean of removing complaints, and restoring contentment in the army. Every measure was adopted, and every scheme apparently pursued, as if Egypt had been secure,

and no eventful proceeding to be feared.

To gain the affections of the Moham-
medan people, the grand festival of the
prophet was celebrated, with as much
solemnity and pomp as the French had
displayed in Grand Cairo, when they
held the anniversary rejoicings of the re-
volution in France. Two parties of
French artists were sent into Upper
Egypt, to fulfil the object of their mis-
sion; and every public arrangement
bore the appearance of security and con-
fidence. But Bonaparte returned to the
city of Alexandria, where his presence
was ostensibly wanted, because it was
the point of danger; and because in that
quarter many public works were going
forward, which, in reward of courage
and fidelity, were to bear the names and
designations of the officers of France,
who had fallen in the battles of Syria
and Egypt.

The commander in chief, however,
had secretly resolved to return to Paris,

and a few generals and artists were to be of the party. Those of them, who were not already in Alexandria, were sent to that city on some ostensible business, and Denon was enjoined to appear in his character of an artist, to take charge of the trophies which had been obtained from the Turks in the late battle of Abukir. Though no hint of the secret object was given to any, but to Berthier, the personal friend of Bonaparte; yet through the darkness of reserve some rays of prophetic light darted across the minds of the assembling few; and the wish of returning to Paris often engaged their thoughts, till hope, in its progress, was sweetly realized.

Two frigates, ready for sea, and lying at single anchor without the new port of Alexandria, raised such ardent expectations in the mind, that they became painful with fear, lest the eager wish and hope should be lost in disappointment. In this state of agitating anxiety the

trembling expectants were informed, by General Menou, about one o'clock in the morning of the 24th of August, that the commander in chief had ordered their immediate attendance upon the beach. The order, being given, could not be disobeyed, and still their dearest hopes were toward France ; but who could assure them that they were not destined to join some division of the army upon a dangerous enterprise; or if bound for Europe, how were they to escape the active and numerous ships of Britain?

By the dawn of day the vessels were fully under sail, and a north-east wind enabled them to steer along the coast of Africa, in order to avoid the British cruisers. Though the favourable breeze was not constant, yet they still directed their course near the southern shores of the Mediterranean, till they descried Sardinia, and then, steering for Corsica, they anchored in the bay of Ajaccio upon the 1st of September. Having

tarried in that island seven days, the vessels proceeded on their voyage ; but were seen and chased by a British squadron. Gantheaume, who had the command of the frigates, proposed to alter their course, and return to Corsica ; but General Bonaparte now resumed that command, which he had not put in exercise since he left the coast of Alexandria, and enjoined the admiral to steer for a port in France. The darkness of the night favoured his escape ; fortune sitting at the helm directed his course ; and, avoiding the neighbourhood of Toulon, where cruisers might have been watching, he arrived safely in the port of Frejus, upon the 14th of September 1799.^b

Never was there a departure conducted with so much secrecy, and yet productive of such interesting events.

^b Denon, vol. ii, p. 245, &c. ; and New Ann. Regist, hist. part, ch. xiv.

Bessieres, Bonaparte's chief of brigade, received a sealed note from the commander in chief, which he was not to unfold till the 26th of August, and then he was to open it at a certain hour, and upon a specified point of the sea shore. His orders were to depart for France, without revealing the command till he was out at sea, and every thing in train to carry him to Europe. A similar note was conveyed to Kleber, but he was enjoined not to examine its contents till twenty-four hours after the vessels had put to sea. The import of this letter was appointing him commander in chief of the army in the east, and ordering Desaix^a to prosecute his designs in Upper

^a This general was afterwards made a prisoner by the British, but released by the treaty of Al Arish. On his way to Europe he was taken by a cruizer, in the Mediterranean, and cast into confinement at Leghorn. Being delivered by Bonaparte, he joined the French armica, and having assisted conspicuously, both by counsel and action, he was killed in the battle of Marengo.

Egypt, and complete his victories over the Arabs and the beys.

The circumstances and views which induced Bonaparte to leave Egypt, and return to France, can never be distinctly known, nor separated from those conjectures which unavoidably attend our search. The precarious situation of Egypt might incline him to retire from those scenes of doubtful expectation, and leave the issue of unpromising events to other men, and less distinguished heroes. Perhaps the distracted and declining state of affairs in France, might induce him to return, with his powerful hand, to restore the strength, and renew the victories of the nation. Shall we venture to assert, that the whole of those motives did not jointly conspire in producing his return; or, as power feeds by indulgence, and encourages ambition, shall we dare to maintain, that he cherished no hope of seizing the helm in a stormy day, and of becoming at length the sole pilot of the state?

But the much-famed hero was received with acclamations of joy in Corsica, his native island; and when he appeared at Paris, he was so far from being censured for leaving his command in Egypt, that the weakened authorities of the state durst not presume to call in question his conduct, and the dissatisfied multitudes received him, as the joy of the nation and the confidence of the people. He arrived in France upon the eve of the seventh revolution, when the Abbe Sieyes was projecting a new constitution, if such ephemeral appointments as those, which have directed, in succession, the public affairs of France, be worthy of a name so dignified and important. The fiend of discord had pervaded the state, and resistance was threatened in every quarter. The severities of the government but heightened the discontent of the nation, and while the royalists were oppressed, the Jacobin party were also fretful, and loud in their complaints.

The tide of public prosperity had run back, and the national glory had become dim. Sad reverses had happened in Italy ; the Russians too were pouring down their hostile troops toward France, and the terrible Suwarrow was at hand. The Abbe Sieyes had looked toward Joubert as a powerful and popular leader, who might join him in active measures to overthrow the degraded government, and establish a more vigorous and efficient authority. But that general was cool in his views, and did not frankly coincide with the wish and designs of the artful projector. At this momentous era, Bonaparte arrived at Paris, and in him was readily found the active and ambitious agent whom Sieyes wanted to adopt his schemes. The existing government was overthrown ; the remaining form of a republic was defaced ; but Sieyes himself was cast into the shade. A senate and various nominal authorities of state were appointed, though, in the office of first consul, Bonaparte held

an absolute sovereignty, but concealed under the veil of a popular name.

Yet this unlimited power did not long satisfy his ambitious soul. It was not enough, in the season of his cherished pride and haughtiness, that he swayed, in reality, an absolute sceptre, though disguised in the shape of consular authority; but, under the influence of inordinate ambition, he desired the appearance, as well as the possession of supreme power. Moving the springs of the new government, and having at his command the energies of the state, the constituted authorities spoke the language of his desires, and new honours were at length proposed for the chief consul. The name of king was not sufficient for the views of the aspiring general. He could not find peace, if such a mind can ever be at rest, while there was one potentate on earth who was called by a higher name, or who possessed greater power and influence than him-

self. He was therefore, in the course of time, hailed emperor of France, and the voice of salutation seemed to proceed from all quarters of the nation: while, in truth, it was but the echo of his state dependants, and the whole acclamations of the country were nothing else than the cry of disguised fear, partially mixed with words of adulation.

Viewing Bonaparte on the exalted station of emperor, where he now stands, we shall neither be dazzled by the splendour of his rank, nor influenced by envy at the greatness of his success; but we shall endeavour to glance, without partiality, at the steps of his military career, and form a true estimate of his character and conduct. As a soldier, he is possessed of undaunted courage, and no man ever questioned the daring intrepidity of his soul; but he is too violent in his passions to enjoy that self-command, and hold those deliberate councils which distinguish a great, and characterise an eminent commander. Few

generals have equalled Bonaparte in point of fame or extent of conquests; and it is not our wish to deprive him of any part of his well-earned trophies. But it does not appear, that his merit as a general is fully commensurate with his progress as a conqueror. The Italian states have long been destitute of that martial spirit which glowed in the legions of Rome; and, having descended from the height of military glory, they have sunk into the lap of indolence, and laid themselves down on the couch of dissipation. They were tainted too by the prevalence of democratic sentiments, and their resistance to the French armies was rather apparent than real. They were not unwilling to become captives to those distinguished heroes who promised them liberty and seducing favours.

The armies of Germany were harassed by the multitudes of France, and subdued by a new method, which the numerous forces of the republic enabled them to pursue. When both armies

were fatigued by the toils of battle, the generals of France brought up their extensive corps of reserve ; and poured their fresh and vigorous troops upon the exhausted forces of the enemy. But it has also been suggested, that many in the armies of Germany were dazzled with the proffered, but false advantages of the French revolution. Thus, while they attempted to fulfil their duty as soldiers of their country, their arm would unavoidably lose a portion of its strength, in fighting against a cause which was then delusively popular.

As an example of the violence of Bonaparte's conduct, in times of irritation and difficulty, we shall not quote instances of indiscreet precipitation in managing the supreme authority of France ; but we shall turn our recollection to S^t. John d'Acre, and bring to our remembrance the hopeless attacks, which were made upon that town and fortress toward the latter end of the siege, when blood was spilt, and lives sacrificed to

disappointed ambition and frantic rage. Even the battle of Marengo, which stands high in the records of fame, was indebted for its success to the effects of a daring attempt, which has met with praise because it was prosperous; but if it had not terminated in a happy issue, the rash deed would have exposed the general to pointed blame.

The revolution of France was accomplished amid scenes of violence; and the successive candidates for power waded to the objects of their ambition through streams of blood. The reigning powers maintained their authority by acts of cruelty, and never did the history of any nation record such accumulated deeds of horror, as those which appeared in the revolutionary movements of France. The people had long been clothed in mourning, and tossed so much by the changes of government that they were eager to enjoy repose, without calling in question the means by which it was produced. The general inquiry, in

that season of lassitude and sorrow, was not so much who should govern, as who could grant them security and bestow rest.

In this time of national affliction and general fatigue, Bonaparte seized the reins of government, and stretched out the branch of protection and peace. He began his career of public authority with so much appearance of wise moderation and disinterested views, that the nation seemed, for a time, to forget his usurped and exorbitant power among the fascinating delights of returning tranquillity. It was hoped by some, that, in due time, he would use his influence and power for restoring the royal race to the throne of France. By others an idea was suggested, that the first consul would lay aside the supreme power of his office when he had recruited the strength, and promoted the harmony of the nation; and that he would regenerate the form and powers of the republic for which he had professed to fight, and for which

the people had copiously shed their blood. In either case he would have woven for himself laurels of disinterested glory, which would not have faded but with the annals of time.

But, instead of a conduct so manly and pleasing, he aimed at nothing but his own aggrandizement, and trampled equally upon royal pretensions and republican power. There does not seem to be any party, or distinction of sentiments, with which his conduct and views do accord. The friends of monarchy must see in him a dangerous example, and behold absolute power in its worst form. Those who are inclined to republican government must lament the abortive schemes of France, and weep over miseries endured in vain. He has again locked the chains of despotism about the neck of France ; and the nation must be afraid to hazard the violent throes, which would be necessary to burst them asunder.

Though the general tenour of his go-

vernment does not verge toward severity, yet uncontrouled and unchecked power is always dangerous in any hand. The French armies, in the scenes of war, furnished themselves by plunder with articles of necessity or convenience, which the resources of the nation could not supply; and still the neutral adjoining states pay a price for the forbearance of the Gallic government. In his European conquests, Bonaparte repelled any tendency in the troops toward personal insults or wanton cruelties; but his conduct in the east was severe in the extreme. Why enter Alexandria with such marks of signal vengeance? The army had suffered little in taking the city, and they could not be roused, by resistance, to ungovernable fury. If the Arabs and Mamlukes harassed them in their progress through Egypt, and committed frequent acts of cruelty, why should the generals of a civilised nation exceed barbarians in violence and revenge? But wherever a village resisted the French,

their houses were exposed to plunder and destruction. The same exterminating system prevailed in Upper as well as Lower Egypt, and the walls of Jaffa resounded with cries of despair.

Heavy charges of unwonted cruelty have been seriously brought against the commander in chief, who is now seated upon the imperial throne of France. He has been publicly accused, by Sir Robert Wilson, of butchering, in cold blood, 3,800 Turkish prisoners, who had been spared in taking the town of Jaffa; he has been branded with administering opium, in such copious draughts, to the sick and wounded of his own soldiers, in the hospitals, that they dropped into slumbers from which they never awakened; and it is also asserted, that he had strangled, at Rosetta, both French and Egyptians, who were seized with the plague. Heaps of bones, on an elevated piece of ground near Jaffa, have been frequently pointed out as the scene where the unhappy prisoners were destroy-

ed : the Pasha al Jezzar used to repeat Jaffa, Jaffa, as a vindication of his intended or actual cruelties ; and Sir Sidney Smith speaks of the massacre at Jaffa, as having been well known to the garrison of S^t. John d'Acre.

During the short peace which lately existed between France and Great Britain, a complaint was entered by General Andreossi, the ambassador of Bonaparte at the court of London; and Sir Robert Wilson was charged with having uttered atrocious calumnies against the French army and their commander in chief. For vindicating Bonaparte's conduct from charges so inhuman and disgraceful, the ambassador of France, in his note to Lord Hawkesbury, appeals to the report of Colonel Sebastiani, who had been sent by Bonaparte as a commercial agent into Syria and Egypt. But the treatment which, in several instances, that officer received, was not flattering, as to the character or impressions which the French had left in the east. We

shall not presume to speak with certainty of the innocence or guilt of the French commander in chief; but while General Andreossi resided in London, he was possessed of the best means for vindicating, if falsely aspersed, the name and character of his master, the first consul of France,

The courts of law were open for instituting an inquiry, and carrying on a trial, which would have done justice to the parties, and placed the truth in a conspicuous point. The charge was worthy of so serious a proceeding. It affected the dearest interests or good name of Bonaparte; it was made by an officer of high character; and, if the accusation had been false, Sir Robert Wilson, who was not an eye witness, but spoke upon what he deemed sufficient authority, would have honourably embraced every proper opportunity of retracting his assertions, and pointing out the means by which he had been misled. The division of Bon was specified,

as the body of soldiers who were compelled to fire upon the prisoners of Jaffa; and surely a sufficient number of that division was to be found in France, who, if the statement were not true, could, by solemn testimony, have wiped away the reproach of so foul a deed. Many members of the institute at Cairo were then residing at Paris, and could easily have appeared at London, and, by an honourable avowal of the truth, have refuted, if ill founded, those charges of inhumanity which they are represented as having indignantly made against the conduct and character of the commander in chief. Even Andreossi himself had a distinguished rank in the army of Egypt, and, if all had been fair and honourable, he might, from personal knowledge, have said and done much to vindicate his master. But while no such methods were pursued, though a grievous charge was made in such direct terms, suspicions will rest upon the character of Bonaparte, and nothing but a

direct proof of innocence will wash away the stain.*

It will frankly be acknowledged, that the present governor of France is a man of extraordinary talents and acute discernment. To have sprung from a humble origin, and to have ascended unexpectedly to the eminence of a throne, was no uncommon event, among the early and irregular governments of the world. Even during the times of imperial Rome, an obscure soldier was sometimes seated on the throne of his country ; but such events have been long excluded from the more improved appointments of enlightened times. To see a foreigner, not distinguished by family, nor supported by royal pretensions, step forth, even in the whirlwind of revolutions, and invest himself with the supreme authority of

* Sir Robert Wilson, vol. i, p. 116, &c. ; and vol. ii. Appendix, p. 308, &c. ; and New Annual Register, A. D. 1799, prin. occuren. ; Sir Sidney Smith's letters.

France, must be ascribed to something more than fortuitous events, or a fortunate coincidence of prosperous arrangements.

Bonaparte must not only be possessed of an ambitious mind, but he must enjoy an aptness of discernment, and a facility of turning to his own advantage every promising appearance and every encouraging event. He sees quickly the sources of safety, and wisely directs their streams. His keen eye detects danger, when rising but in feeble forms ; and he seems to catch, with a single glance, the things which promote his interest or tend to his hurt. Whether Bonaparte and his family will be secured in the honours of a throne, or whether, in the progress of events, they shall be hurled from their grandeur, and levelled with the dust, are arrangements of Providence, which lie concealed in the destinies of Heaven. But the elevation of Napoleon Bonaparte to the dignity of an imperial crown will

remain a subject of unspeakable astonishment while histories of Europe or France endure.

We have found, in our preceding inquiries, that Bonaparte, while at the head of the army in Egypt, opened a communication with the court of Constantinople, and endeavoured to remove the wrath and resentment which were excited in the breast of the grand signior against the conduct of the French, in making a descent upon Syria and Egypt. He hinted to Kleber, who succeeded him in the command, that he should still attempt to negotiate with the Ottoman court, and endeavour to retain a military and commercial influence in Egypt. At the same time, it was his wish to offer the restoration of the civil power to the Turkish government, and the re-establishment of an Ottoman Pasha in the city of Grand Cairo. But the British interest prevailed at Constantinople, and the overtures of the French were proudly rejected. Though Ge-

neral Kleber was amusing the grand vizier with offers of peace and friendship; yet still this Turkish officer advanced with his troops, and, about the end of autumn, the van guard of a numerous army arrived at Jaffa.

In the meantime, Murad Bey had suffered some reverses of fortune in Upper Egypt. Having been pursued by a party of cavalry, with horse artillery, and a number of infantry mounted on dromedaries, he was overtaken in the desert of Sediman, and completely routed. About the same time a Turkish fleet appeared off the coast of Damietta, and, by the first of November, they had landed an army of 4,000 men. Having entrenched themselves on the sea-side, between the Nile and lake Menzalah, they were attacked by a division of the French army, under the command of General Verdier, and few of them escaped death or the prison. Attempts at negociation were still continued, and Sir Sidney Smith, who re-

mained in force off the shores of Syria and Egypt, gave General Kleber to understand, that no treaty could be made without the concurrence of Great Britain.^b

Commissioners from the different parties opened a conference, on-board the *Tigre*, and an armistice was agreed upon, for the purpose of adopting such measures as might establish an effectual treaty. Dispatches were sent off to inform the grand vizer of the provisional agreement; but the vessel being detained by contrary winds, a part of his army, in the meantime having left Gaza, besieged Al Arish, and took it in the course of seven days. This event happened about the beginning of January A. D. 1800, and, upon the 24th of the same month, a treaty was entered into, in the Turkish camp before Al Arish, by which the French became bound to evacuate Egypt in a limited time. As

^b New Ann. Reg. A. D. 1799, hist. part, ch. 14.

the French army were not subdued, but for prudential reasons had made an offer of departure, therefore they were to be permitted to embark with their arms, and carry along with them their private property. They were to be protected during their stay in Egypt, and the sick and wounded, which might be left, were to be treated with due attention. Ships necessary for conveying the army to the ports of France were to be provided from the vessels belonging to that government in Egypt, aided by a competent supply from the Turkish fleet.

We are well persuaded, that General Kleber entered into the treaty of Al Arish with the full design of being faithful to the engagement ; but he soon became acquainted with the elevation of Bonaparte to the government of France, and with the prosperous shape which the affairs of that country were beginning to re-assume. It had been with reluctance, and by threatening evils on every side, that the French

commander in chief had consented to withdraw his troops from Egypt ; and now when the current of fortune, under the direction of Bonaparte, seemed to be carrying back prosperity to France, he was anxious to find an excuse for breaking the treaty which was signed at Al Arish. Where men are desirous of finding occasion to differ and be at variance, the common occurrences of life will easily afford materials for contention and strife. Among the numerous articles, which were included in the treaty, it might be found difficult to fulfil the whole with punctual correctness, and Turkish sloth might, with blameable inactivity, leave some of them inaccurately performed ; but whatever was the actual situation of affairs, General Kleber complained, that the stipulated supplies were not regularly furnished for his troops.

With affected disgust at the conduct of the Turks, he proposed a suspension of the treaty of Al Arish ; but craved a

continuance of the armistice, and a friendly intercourse among the parties, till a more immediate explanation should take place among the courts of France, London, and Constantinople. Soon after those wishes were expressed, an opportunity offered for Kleber to renew the war. The nature of those proposals, which he had made for evacuating Egypt was made known in the divan of the grand signior, and conveyed by Lord Elgin to the court of London. Orders were immediately dispatched to Admiral Keith, who had a command in the Mediterranean, that no convention should be ratified for evacuating Egypt, which had not for its basis the unconditional surrender of the French army, and the delivering up to the Turks all their ships and stores which were then in Egypt.

Nothing now was heard but the sound of war, and Kleber, having concentrated his troops at Grand Cairo, was called out upon the 20th of March to

meet the Turkish army in battle. The troops of the grand vizer had appeared within five miles of Cairo, at the town of Matariah, which was the ancient Heliopolis. Vast multitudes appeared in connection with his banners, and report had stated them at 80,000, but the real effective troops who followed him scarcely amounted to half that number. Fifteen thousand soldiers were all that General Kleber could collect ; and having drawn them up in two lines, he so ordered their position, that they were flanked and protected by a thicket of date trees. In the meantime the Turkish army had pushed forward into the plain between Matariah and Al Hanka. About noon the battle began, and in a short time the forces of the grand vizer gave way, and were put to flight. While the French troops were pursuing them toward Syria, a detachment of the vizer's army, under the command of Nazuf Pasha, escaped the notice of the enemy, and entered Grand Cairo.

Having asserted that the French were overthrown in battle, they were instantly joined by many of the inhabitants, and they committed great cruelties throughout the city. The French were still in possession of the castle, and various parts of Grand Cairo were bravely defended by the soldiers whom Kleber had left. While they were severely pressed, and on the point of despair, General Le Grange arrived with a party from Al Hanka, and recruited their declining strength. Upon the 26th of March, Kleber, the commander in chief, returned with the army to Grand Cairo, and adopted measures to retake the city, and restore tranquillity. With much difficulty, and after repeated attempts, he gained possession of Bulak, and the Turks, notwithstanding every effort and evasion, were compelled to surrender Grand Cairo upon the 24th of April.

About this time Murad Bey was so weakened and discouraged that he made peace with Kleber, and, as a tri-

butary prince, was to govern a district of Upper Egypt. Suez too was now recovered by the French; for Colonel Murray, who had taken possession of it with 5 or 600 British soldiers, and more than an equal number of men from Yeman and Mecca, re-embarked his troops, and retired toward Cossir. Bending, as they had always done, to the prevailing powers of the day, the people of Grand Cairo were at peace, and more than usual tranquillity every where prevailed. Putting confidence in the obedience and professed affection of the people, Kleber inlisted 1,500 Greeks, and dignified that body of soldiers with the ancient name of legion. Every thing seemed to promise happier effects, than those which had lately been experienced; but upon the 13th of June, while Kleber was walking, without fear or suspicion, upon the terrace of his own garden in Grand Cairo, an assassin stabbed him with a poniard, and he soon expired.

This base transaction is involved in that obscurity, which the progressive circumstances of time will never probably be able to dispel. General Menou, who succeeded to the chief command, ascribed the cowardly deed to the influence of the grand vizier or Sir Sidney Smith. The accusation being more than indirectly made, was repelled with merited disdain, and Menou himself did not escape suspicion and murmurs. That insubordination, which the French revolution had ingendered, and that equalizing desire, which its successive changes continually cherished, had also introduced discontentment and wild projects into the army of the east. The high and acknowledged powers of Bonaparte could not prevent disobedience before the walls of St. John d'Acre; Menou did not dutifully regard the orders of Kleber, and now, when he himself was invested with the supreme command, fretfulness and discontent-

ment prevailed in the army. The assassin of General Kleber was seized and impaled alive, but no important discovery was made. We shall not throw aspersions where there is neither knowledge nor certainty to direct us; but shall leave the origin of this unhallowed deed in that unsearchable darkness, to which doubtful appearances and mysterious circumstances have unavoidably consigned it.

Regret and genuine sorrow sunk deep into the heart of the French army; for Kleber was a man who stood high in their esteem, and was in full possession of their confidence. He was born in Germany, and yet he was beloved by the French, as if he had been one of their own nation. His virtues in private life, added to his skill and courage as a soldier, secured to him the sigh and tear of lasting remembrance. Menou was perhaps the principal person in Egypt, who did not, in reality, mourn

for his death ; but to Bonaparte alone it was productive of repose. The departure of that general from Egypt was felt with resentment by the indignant and high-spirited Kleber. He had been placed, without his own choice or approbation, in a state of imminent hazard, and dangerous responsibility. The revenues were deficient and the soldiers discontented with their lot. They considered Bonaparte as having retired in pursuit of his own aggrandizement, or as having fled for personal safety, and left them to perish by the power of disease, or the sword of the enemy. Kleber vowed revenge ; and while the vow was recorded in heaven, the indelible remembrance was lodged in his own breast. The rise of Bonaparte to the head of the French government would not have altered the purpose of Kleber, and who knows what consequences might have flowed from the resentful determination of so intrepid a mind?

But the hand of violence stopped the progress of his high indignation, and all his projects of glory or revenge sunk with himself into the silence of the grave.

CHAP. III.

Malta taken by the French. . . . A secret expedition from Britain. . . . Sir Ralph Abercromby and Admiral Lord Keith have the command. . . . Arrive at Malta and Marmorice. . . . Land at Abukir. . . . Successful battles on shore. . . . The death of Sir Ralph Abercromby.

THOUGH the British councils had positively forbidden the acceptance of any terms from the French, but those of an unconditional surrender ; yet no sooner were they made acquainted with the treaty of Al Arish than they immediately dispatched orders to abide by the conditions, and ratify the whole. When this acquiescence was made known to Sir Sidney Smith, Lieutenant Wright, of the Tigre, was sent, without

delay, to communicate the intelligence at Grand Cairo ; but the commander in chief proudly refused to renew the negotiation, or adhere to the conditions of the late agreement.

General Menou entered upon the office of directing the army in the east, with a firm determination to submit to every hardship rather than relinquish the conquest of Egypt. The favourable change, which the French affairs had taken in Europe, stimulated him also with an ardent desire to be crowned with success, on the banks of the Nile. He was ambitious of thus recommending himself to the favour of the first consul, and of enjoying that applause, which the complete subjugation of Egypt would insure. He was moreover fully convinced, that in the season of returning prosperity the French government would endeavour to send such supplies of men and military stores, as would enable him to fulfil the object of his dearest wish.

In the meantime he exerted his whole powers to place the country in the best state of defence which the perilous condition of affairs would allow. He carried forward the works which his predecessors had begun, finished the lines and forts which were intended to protect Alexandria, and built redoubts for defending the coast. So well were his plans laid, and so prosperous was he for a season, that he defied the skill and perseverance of Sir Sidney Smith, who attempted to destroy the French transports, in the harbours of Alexandria. Mr. Spurling, the naval architect, who was engaged at Rhodes in the service of the grand signior, supplied the British commodore with such vessels as were necessary for the attempt ; but the batteries from the shore protected the ships, and the daring design was of necessity given over.

The declining energy of the French government, for sometime previous to the return of Bonaparte from Egypt,

had induced the court of London to form the plan of a secret expedition. We are not enabled to specify the immediate point of its first destination; but it does not appear to have been originally equipped for Egypt. Upon the 24th of April, A. D. 1800, this fleet of enterprise sailed from Torbay, and steered toward the Mediterranean sea. It was now generally supposed, on-board, that they were destined to operate against Spain, or to lend their aid to some of the Italian states, for recovering that rank in the scale of Europe which the French conquests had lately taken away. But the state of affairs, both on the continent, and in the east, altered the views of the British government, and a descent upon Egypt was finally adopted.

Sir Ralph Abercromby, K. B. was appointed to the chief command of the army, and Lord Keith was admiral of the fleet. Toward the end of October, when the ships were at anchor in the bay of Gibraltar, dispatches arrived

from London, which relieved the anxieties, and removed the doubts, of the fleet. The regiments, which had been inlisted for limited services, were commanded to return with Lieutenant-general Sir James Pulteney, for the defence of Portugal, excepting the 40th and 63^d regiments, who were ordered to do duty in the garrison at Malta. After various movements, the fleet and troops, commanded by Sir Ralph Abercromby, set sail, and arrived in the harbour of La Valetta, upon the 19th day of November.^a

Upon the return of Lord Nelson, from his triumphs at Abukir, he had left Captain Ball, with three ships of the line and some vessels of inferior strength to block up the harbours of Malta, and prevent provisions or supplies from being

^a Lieut. Anderson's Journal of the secret expedition, 4to, London, 1802, ch. i, ii, &c.; Captain Walsh's Journal of the campaign in Egypt, 4to. London, A. D. 1803, p. 1, &c.

sent into the island. The French, upon taking possession of the place, had pillaged the people; and, by pursuing unconciliating and severe measures, they produced tumults and rebellion. So much enraged became the populace, that, toward the latter end of the year 1799, the garrison of Civita Vecchia was entirely massacred, and the French compelled to seek refuge, and remain shut up in La Valetta, and the places of strength which were connected with the town. The Guilleaume Tell, which escaped from the naval battle of Abukir, was taken by the British, in attempting to depart from Malta; and by degrees military forces were thrown into the island for the support of the inhabitants. The French, being cut off from a communication with the sea, were exposed to the sufferings of famine and every concomitant distress. In this trying and hopeless situation, the brave and indefatigable General Vaubois, upon the 5th of September A. D. 1800, surren-

dered to Major-general Pigott, who commanded the British forces.

During his stay in this island, the experienced and assiduous General Sir Ralph Abercromby was attentive to every measure, which could promote the health or general advantage of the army; and every heart was full of expectation, under the command of the justly celebrated and much beloved commander. Tenders of service, in Egypt, were volunteered, by different corps in the garrison; but the importance of securely defending Malta, did not allow the general to accept the whole offers, which were zealously made. Independent of 500 Maltese, who inlisted to act as pioneers, the whole troops which set sail for Egypt amounted to 17,489. On the 17th of December they began to embark, upon the 20th the first division sailed out of the harbour, and next day the remainder followed. Their destination was not immediately for the Egyptian shore, because the expedition

was to be performed in connection with the Turkish government. The troops were to wait at some island in the Levant, or in some harbour of Asia Minor, till the stipulated forces and supplies of the grand signior should arrive.^b

Rhodes did not afford a proper harbour for ships of the line; the bay of Macri was too much exposed for that tempestuous season; and therefore they steered their course for the port of Marmorice. There the first division arrived upon the 28th of December, and the last upon the 1st of January immediately following. The haven of Marmorice may be entered by either of two openings, but that which is situated on the right, in approaching the bay, is rather to be preferred. Though in some parts the entrance is but narrow; yet being perfectly free from rocks, the navigation is safe, and the depth of the

^b Anderson's Journal, ch. iv.; and Walsh's Journal, p. 22, 23.

water is from twenty to twenty-six fathoms. On both sides of this opening, the land is high and the rocks abrupt. The harbour is in the form of a bason, and is at least twenty miles in circumference, every where deep in water, and possessing good ground for anchorage.

The scenery is highly picturesque, and the general appearance approaches to the sublime. The land, which bounds the harbour, rises in the form of an amphitheatre, and is mostly covered with trees. Among the various shades, which are formed by the woods, the grey rock occasionally appears in bold risings; and the waving branches of the trees bend in profuse luxuriance toward the water. The whole is over-topped by barren hills, where verdure is rarely seen; except where scattered trees, and scanty clumps of natural wood, relieve the fatigued and exploring eye. The entrance of the British fleet into the haven of Marmorice was peculiarly delightful as well as striking. They had

been tossed by the storms, during a part of their voyage; the sky had been lowering; and even when they approached the land, the threatening gales continued to blow; but all at once the bay of Marmorice presented a smooth surface of water; and the idea of safety, combined with the impressiveness of the scene, was productive of delight as well as admiration.

The great object for sailing to the coast of Asia Minor did not appear to be in a happy train of fulfilment. The Turkish fleet was not ready for co-operation, the grand vizer's army was unprepared at Jaffa, and the horses, which arrived from Constantinople for the British cavalry, were in such bad order that few of them were fit for service; and none of them in Europe would have been mounted by a British trooper. It is more than probable, that the person employed by Lord Elgin to procure them had not attentively discharged his duty, or rather that they

had afterwards been fraudulently exchanged, by the avaricious agents of the Turkish government. While the British forces were waiting for the arrival of the grand signior's fleet, from the Dardanelles, Major-general Moore was dispatched to Jaffa, in order to have a communication with the grand vizier; and, in the meantime, the sick belonging to the fleet were taken on shore, and received much benefit from this salutary measure.

The inconsiderable town of Marmrice could not afford them accommodation, and therefore they were placed in a more healthy situation, in a camp upon the beach. Fire-wood was provided in abundance for the ships; and the people of the country, who were fearful and alarmed at first, gradually acquired confidence, and supplied the fleet with plenty of provisions. The leisure, which the forces of the expedition thus possessed, was partly occupied by placing the men in boats, and making them fami-

liar with the art of landing quickly; for this was a species of service which was likely to be of great importance on a future day. In about three weeks, two Turkish sloops of war arrived in the haven of Marmorice, under the command of the Capitan Bèy, while his own ship, mounting 86 guns, was in the bay of Macri. A number of transports, gunboats, and other small vessels, were now provided by the Turks, to assist in the service of the fleet; and upon the 23^d of January Major-general Moore returned from Jaffa.

His report concerning the army of the grand vizer was extremely discouraging to those hopes, which had been entertained of its co-operation with the British forces. It was in the very worst state of a disorderly Turkish army. The camp consisted of a motley crew belonging to different provinces, and associated, some of them for plunder, and some of them for war. The number of the soldiers could not be ascertained,

for, as the commanding officers reaped advantages from exaggerated returns, they refused to permit a muster ; and when proposed by the grand vizer, a few shot, fired in the Turkish manner into the tent of his highness, announced the danger of the proposal, and the idea was abandoned.

Perhaps the easiest way of penetrating into Egypt would have been to land the army at S^t. John d'Acre, and conduct them by short marches to Grand Cairo. The French had no forces in the Delta which could have opposed the British troops in connection with the vizer's army, nor are we persuaded that Cairo itself could have made a long or an effectual resistance. There were still indeed about 30,000 French in Egypt, with a multitude of auxiliaries whom they had procured in the country ; but a considerable division of the army was stationed in Alexandria, and not a few were divided among the various forts and towns throughout the Delta. To

gain possession of Grand Cairo would have been a favourable event toward obtaining the conquest of Egypt, and there was every reason to expect that the Mamlukes and Arabs would join the British ; but still, without the command of Alexandria, they could never become masters of the country.

It therefore appeared to be absolutely necessary, for insuring a probability of final success, that an attempt should be made to wrest the city of Alexandria from the power and possession of the French. Upon the morning of February 17th, A. D. 1801, there was an assembly of the general officers on-board the Kent, and Sir Ralph Abercromby then acquainted them with the resolution which he had taken. Alexandria was the object which they were to hold immediately in their view. Every thing was now attentively prepared for embarking the troops ; and, early in the morning of February the 22^d, the signal for unmooring was made from Lord

Keith's ship. In the evening the whole of the fleet was under way, and the noble sight charmed the forces with the most enlivening hopes.

Upon the third day that the ships had been at sea, the weather became stormy. One of the Greek vessels foundered; and the wind continuing to increase, the rest of the small craft were obliged to seek shelter in the most convenient ports and harbours. Upon the evening of the 1st of March a signal was made, which announced the appearance of land; but as that part of the coast lies low, the fleet, to avoid any inconvenience during the darkness of the night, were ordered to stand off till the morning. Then they made toward land, and about ten o'clock anchored in the bay of Abukir. They had taken up the very station where the engagement happened on the celebrated 1st of August 1798, for Lord Keith's ship, the *Foudroyant*, chafed her cables upon the wreck of *l'Orient*, or some other French ship which had sunk in

that battle. About the time that the British fleet approached the bay of Abukir, the frigate *Regénérée* and the brig *Lodi* passed unobserved, and entered the harbour of Alexandria. They carried with them seasonable supplies for the army of Egypt; and they brightened their hopes with the animating assurance, that Admiral Gantheaume would soon arrive with large reinforcements.^a

Immediately after the fleet had arrived in the bay of Marmorice, the *Minotaur* and *Northumberland*, together with the *Penelope* frigate, were sent to blockade the ports of Alexandria, that Sir Richard Bickerton and Sir Sidney Smith might leave that situation, upon which they had long been tossed, and join the fleet on the coast of Asia Minor. Major M'Kerris had been sent to examine the shore and

^a Walsh, p. 48, 49, &c.; Anderson, ch. 6; and Baldwin's Political recollections, London, 8vo, A. D. 1802, p. 68, 69, &c.

peninsula of Abukir, and to make a report, for assisting the arrangements which might be found necessary for landing the troops. As soon as the fleet came to an anchor in the road, a signal was hoisted, and kept flying all morning for the return of Major M'Kerris ; but the signal was made and continued in vain, for he had gone to the land of silence and death. Venturing too far, in the eager and over-anxious discharge of his duty, he was discovered by the French ; and when returning from the shore in the Petterel sloop of war, he was pursued by a boat of the enemy, and unfortunately killed. Major Fletcher, who accompanied him in the service, was seized and taken prisoner.^b

The death of Major M'Kerris was much to be lamented every way. He was chief engineer of the expedition ; and was no less skilful in his profession than zealous in the service of his coun-

^b Walsh, p. 72 ; and Anderson, p. 214.

try. But while other men of abilities could be found in the army to take his place, what was to soothe the distress of his friends? It was amongst them that sorrow, took up its dark abode, and there regret pointed its afflictions. He died in the career of glory, and carried to his grave the esteem of his fellow-soldiers; yet these considerations, though highly honourable, did but augment the sorrow, that one so valuable and so much beloved was not spared by the disposal of Providence to be further useful to the public, and to bless his father's house.

The wind began to blow so fresh toward the land, and such breakers were raised in the shallow water near the shore, that it was impossible to attempt a landing. On the sixth, the violence of the storm had considerably abated; but still the agitated waters swelled in such tremendous waves, that it was deemed imprudent to order the soldiers into their boats. The French had been

apprised of the projected operation, and they were busily employed in making preparations for opposing the descent. It was therefore evident, that the landing of the forces would meet with such powerful resistance, that they ought not to be compelled to struggle against the roughness of the sea nor the violence of the waves.

In the meantime Sir Ralph Abercromby, with that assiduous care which marked his conduct, went on-board a small vessel, and reconnoitred the shore; and Sir Sidney Smith, with three armed launches, examined the entrance into the lake Abukir. By the assistance of Lieutenant Brown, and a party of men belonging to the *Foudroyant*, some partial injuries were done to the works and arrangements of the enemy; but a seasonable and wise retreat was at length necessary to save our adventurous countrymen from the vigilance and power of the French.

Upon the seventh the sea continued

rough; but it was returning so evidently to a state of calmness, that orders were issued throughout the fleet to prepare for landing on the following day. By two o'clock in the morning, a rocket, the appointed signal, was fired from the admiral's ship, and in less than two hours the boats, being filled with troops, were ready to obey the command. Just without the reach of the guns on shore, some armed vessels were anchored near one another, about which the boats were to rendezvous, and be ready, under proper orders, to pull in concert toward the land. The division which was then preparing to advance, consisted of those soldiers who were under the command of Majors-general Moore, Ludlow, and Coote, together with Brigadier-general Oakes, and they amounted to more than 5,000 men, with ten pieces of cannon. Being commanded to depart, they moved off with regularity and courage, and all was silence but the noise of the oars. Awe and deep contemplation sat on the

brow of every beholder, while hope and courage beamed from the eye of those who were hastening to the shore. It was a serious attempt; and though none could doubt the courage of the soldiers and sailors of Great Britain; yet there are certain deeds and arduous undertakings, which no prowess nor perseverance can accomplish. The French were already on shore, they were powerful in artillery, and had numbers of cavalry at their command; whereas the British were to approach the land in boats, and might be routed by a prepared enemy, without having time to form upon the beach.

Soon after eight o'clock in the morning, the boats had all arrived at the vessels, which have already been mentioned as stationed for the rendezvous. Being instantly formed into a line, the signal was made by the honourable Captain Cochrane of the navy; and the whole were instantly in motion, pulling undauntingly toward the shore. No enemy was seen either upon the beach,

or posted upon the sand-hills; every thing was silent as if no human eye had spitefully watched their motions. But no sooner were the boats within their reach, than the batteries were opened, and the guns from the castle of Abukir were pointed with effect. Still, however, the danger was comparatively small, and few losses were sustained.

Though the *Fury* and *Tartarus* bomb vessels, with various sloops and gun-boats, were stationed in the bay to protect the landing of the British forces; yet they were not able to accomplish the end which was desired. In proportion as the boats approached the shore, so the danger became greater, and the resistance more alarming. It is impossible to describe the dreadful situation in which the men were placed. Grape-shot and shells, musket-bullets, and diversified means of destruction, were flying so thick and constant, that the sea about the boats was in perfect agitation. The soldiers were seated so closely, that

nothing could be done by them either for their own defence, or to annoy the enemy. The sailors were exposed to a tremendous fire in rowing and pulling forward; but no fearfulness or dismay appeared throughout the whole scene. Their honour, the love of their country, and that resignation which unavoidable danger produces, directed their feelings and guided their conduct.

When they were ready to leap upon the beach, the French soldiers rushed toward the boats, and, with fixed bayonets, dealt death and destruction. But nothing could appal the courage, or shake the resolution of the British forces. In this scene of horror and devastation they sprung upon the shore, and, while some of them formed in regular order upon the beach, others rushed up a steep sand-hill, where the strength of the army was concentrated, and resolutely became masters of an advantageous position. The French forces extended on their right toward the lake Abukir, and their

left was flanked and protected by the fort ; but their ardour and confidence were rather abated when they found the centre of their position occupied by the British.

After the violence of the contest had lasted about twenty minutes on shore, the French began to give way, and retired along the peninsula toward the city of Alexandria. It was the 23^d regiment, and four flank companies of the 40th, under the command of General Oakes, attached to General Moore and the reserve, who with such inestimable courage and perseverance climbed up a steep hill opposite the landing place, while the sand was every moment yielding under their feet, and where the instruments of death were pointed against them. The guards, under the direction of General Ludlow, and the corps who were commanded by General Coote, merited and received universal approbation. In short, every soldier on shore did honour to himself and his country ;

and those who had not yet landed panted for the glory of that illustrious day.*

Scarcely 2,000 of the British forces were engaged in this splendid victory, for the rest of the divisions were not ready to land till the triumph was obtained. The valour and conduct of the invading troops are thus placed in a striking and honourable point of view, for they were opposed by a powerful body of the French. Their number, even as stated by themselves, was 1,780,^c and among these, were 230 cavalry well mounted. They had the advantage of a fort and batteries, they were well acquainted with the nature of the ground; and had chosen the most favourable position on the shore, while the forces of Sir Ralph Abercromby were under the necessity of attacking the enemy in detached parties, and in bodies compara-

^c Sir Robert Wilson, vol. i, p. 18, &c. ; and Walsh, p. 73, &c.

^d The opposing forces of the French are generally stated at a much greater number.

tively small. Yet in circumstances so discouraging and unfavourable, they were never thrown into disorder, but in one point, and that only for an instant, till the 58th regiment flew to their relief, and enabled them to restore their firmness and their defence.

The French forces were under the command of General Friant; and their conduct was neither disgraceful to themselves nor dishonourable to their country. True, indeed, they were overcome, but the 61st demi-brigade, as well as the 18th and 20th dragoons, fought with inestimable ardour; and wherever the French soldiers were engaged, they displayed national courage and skilful movements. That they were vanquished, however, in the particular circumstances which have already been reviewed, must remain a matter of astonishment, while the history of the battle and the records of the day shall remain. Must we suppose that the French soldiers in Egypt were dispirited, in some

degree, by the checks which they had already received in the east; or shall we conclude, that the appearance of so formidable a British fleet filled them with uneasy apprehensions, and, in the day of trial, enfeebled their arm?*

The boldness of the British in attacking their strongest position on the sand-hill, and the intrepid conduct which they displayed, though scattered and irregularly formed, could not fail to strike the French with awful impressions of what might be done by the forces of Sir Ralph Abercromby, when wholly landed and drawn up in proper array. The small number of French soldiers, which were left for the defence of Alexandria, might suggest to them how difficult it would be to resist so powerful an army, as that which the British had sent to defy them. Yet the fears arising from such considerations as these ought to

* Regnier, or Reynier's Campaign, London, A. D. 1802, 8vo, p. 9, &c.

have been considerably relieved, by the expectation of receiving speedy succours from the troops which were stationed at Grand Cairo. No sooner had the British fleet appeared, than a message was sent with the quickness of alarm, and reinforcements were soon to be expected at the point of danger.

General Menou is charged with incapacity as commander in chief, because he did not concentrate the French forces in the city of Alexandria ; and he is accused of stubbornness for adhering to his plan, in opposition to the opinion and representations of many officers and men of skill. Menou, on his part, complains of the increase and violence of that insubordination, which had long been prevalent in the army of the east. He asserted, that there was among the troops under his command a party, who preferred their private ease to the national advantage and the glory of France. To decide upon the conduct of General Menou would require much local know-

ledge, and the most accurate statement of that information, which the French commander in chief possessed respecting the views and orders of the enemy.

As the forces of Sir Ralph Abercromby arrived in the bay of Abukir, it would certainly have been fortunate for the French, if the army of Egypt had been chiefly collected in the neighbourhood of Alexandria ; but if this measure had been adopted, and the British, in connection with the troops of the grand vizier, had marched from Jaffa into Egypt, Grand Cairo must have easily fallen, and Menou would have been blamed and censured for his conduct. But if so decisive an event had not taken place, yet to withdraw the general body of the troops, and leave the capital with only a small garrison, might have been productive of danger from another quarter. Murad Bey had made peace with the French, as we have mentioned, and there was an imposing appearance of submission throughout the country ; but if the ter-

ror of their arms had been removed from Cairo, the nation would have revolted, and the power of France would have been destroyed.

If the French forces had mosly been removed to Alexandria, and either of these consequences had flowed from that arrangement, the court of Paris could have had little prospect of recovering Egypt. The Turkish forces, which would have been poured into the interior, must have formed a bulwark against the return of the French army; the slightly defended posts and forts would soon have been taken; and the bleeding wounds of the people at large would have served as painful memorials to unite the nation against the intrusions of an enemy, so much disliked and so severe. Ships of Great Britain blockaded the ports of Alexandria, and it remained a doubt whether the squadron of Admiral Gantheaume would be allowed to enter. To complete the dilemma, an additional number of British

ships would probably be sent to assist in guarding the mouths of the Nile, as well as the bay of Alexandria ; and thus, the French army, being shut up both by sea and land, must be exposed to famine, and forced to surrender.

General Menou had forces in considerable strength at Rhamaniah, and, having the Delta at his command, he was prepared to receive reinforcements, by whatever means they might have been conveyed, to the neighbouring parts of the Levant. Thus it would appear, that the French commander in chief had strong reasons for adopting the measures which he pursued ; and we are not always to judge of the wisdom or folly of a transaction by the issue of the deed. Sometimes the best laid plans are abortive in their consequences, while half-formed schemes, and ill-digested projects are fortunate in their effects. To make a proper estimate of another man's proceedings, we must place ourselves in his situation, and

judge from the circumstances and views which directed him. In forming an opinion concerning the propriety of actions, which have already appeared in their effects, we must exclude from our view the prosperous, or unsuccessful issue; and consider, in the abstract, those principles which alone were afforded to the projector for guiding his understanding and directing his judgment. In this view of the subject, the conduct of General Menou does not appear to have been worthy of blame; though another in his situation might have acted in a different manner, and the consequences might have been more favourable to the interest and honour of France: . . .

During the late engagement at the landing of the troops, General Coote, as the eldest officer on shore, commanded the British forces, and to him, as well as to the whole detachment, Sir Ralph Abercromby returned his best thanks. It was an action pregnant with honour to the British name, and the

veteran commander in chief spoke of it in terms of the highest praise. Sir Ralph Abercromby, with all his natural anxiety and care, hastened on shore to direct the movements of his troops; but the day was won before his arrival; and though the armies continued for a while to cannonade each another, yet nothing important occurred.^a

During the course of this day, the forces were mostly landed; but some time elapsed before the whole stores and baggage were gotten on shore. The Greek and Turkish vessels had not hitherto arrived; and for several days the men were without tents. The greater part of the peninsula was now abandoned to the British; but the fort of Abukir refused to surrender, and a detachment of the troops was sent to besiege it. The lake of Abukir, being at the command of General Abercromby, it was taken possession of by armed launches;

^a Walsh, p. 79, &c.; and Anderson, p. 223, &c.

and a depository^b being formed upon the peninsula at its bank, great convenience was afterwards enjoyed in supplying the army by boats upon the lake.

Several skirmishes were daily happening between the out-posts of the French and British armies ; but no regular engagement ensued till the 13th of March. Upon the preceding day, the forces of Sir Ralph Abercromby marched forward beyond the redoubt of Mandara ; and, notwithstanding the opposition, which they experienced from the increased cavalry of the enemy, they continued to advance while the French retreated. The army of General Menou were at length discovered in a strong position, upon a range of sand-hills. Their right was stretched toward the canal of Alexandria, and their left was supported by a ruined palace, or extensive building, which had probably been erected by some of the Romans. The British

^b Or dépôt.

army halted all night upon the plain, and formed into two lines, from the sea on the right to the lake of Abukir upon the left.

The situation of the enemy was certainly strong, but in proportion to its importance so was it necessary for the British to possess it. An attack was therefore resolved upon, and the army received orders to be ready to march by five o'clock in the morning ; but owing to some unavoidable arrangements and delays, it was past six before they were ready to advance. The whole were required to form into columns, and they began their march in the following order.—Major-general Lord Cavan's brigade was on the left, supported by Brigadier-general Stuart and Doyle's brigades, with the dismounted cavalry ; the forces commanded by Major-general Cradock were on the right, and supported in the rear by General Coote's brigade. The reserve marched in two columns along the sea-shore, parallel

with the forces of Major-general Coote, and the guards in the rear of General Cradock, were opposite to the dismounted guards in the line of columns, led forward by Lord Cavan. The 90th regiment was the advance-guard of Major-general Cradock, and the 92^d had a similar appointment in the front of Lord Cavan. Thus the whole army was placed in columns, with the left companies of every regiment in front.

As our army approached within gunshot of the enemy's lines, a tremendous fire was opened upon them, and in prompt obedience to an order given, they formed by dexterous movements into two lines; continuing the same advance-guards, and having the same troops in rear, but the dismounted cavalry and reserve remained in columns throughout the whole action. The French now advanced with rapid movements, that, if possible, they might attack the British army before it recovered its firmness, after having altered its

form and changed its position. Sir Ralph Abercromby had given it as the leading order of the day, that his men should endeavour to turn the right of the French army; for the left was denied by being so placed, that it could not be approached without a destructive fire from the other parts of the line. But the army of Menou, having advanced from the heights, altered their position, and rendered it easy to attack them in a different manner. General Friant suggested to Lanusse, that the British lines could be most advantageously opposed, and attacked in the centre, if the movement were made with expedition; for they were advancing in that point toward an eminence or sand-hill, which, if they once possessed it, would afford them considerable protection.

It was the 90th regiment which was advancing toward that elevated situation, and against them the 22^d chasseurs darted with all the swiftness of the best mounted cavalry of France; yet none of

our brave troops were overcome by fear, or laid down their arms, as General Regnier states, but stood in firm array, and were ready to receive them on their pointed bayonets. The well-directed volley, which the 90th had fired, as the chasseurs were hastening to the attack, compelled them on a sudden to skirt along the line, and there were but few who hazarded an immediate engagement, and these were sacrificed by their own rashness.

The 4th light dragoons, which General Lanusse had left in reserve, sprung forward to the assistance of the disordered chasseurs; but though a temporary impression was made upon the lines of the 90th British regiment, yet the French were obliged to retreat with considerable loss. The 18th regiment of the French, which was intended also as a corps de reserve upon the left, pushed forward in order of battle, when they saw the disasters of their countrymen; but were opposed and thrown

into disorder by the 8th regiment of the British. Upon the left of the French army the brave 61st demi-brigade advanced, with two field-pieces; but the 92^d regiment, belonging to General Abercromby's army, received them with firmness, and put them to flight. Thus beaten and repulsed at every point, the French army retreated, and were driven from station to station, till they took post near Alexandria, upon the heights of Nicopolis, where Julius Cæsar founded a city, in honour of the complete victory which he finally obtained over the Egyptians.^a

It was now in agitation that the British should follow up the advantage which they had already obtained, and attempt to drive the French from their new position. To succeed in this enterprise must have been of vast moment to the views and designs of Sir Ralph Abercromby. To have possessed the heights

^a Dio. Cass. vol. i, p. 649.

of Nicopolis was almost equivalent to the taking of Alexandria itself, for Menou had not yet arrived from Grand Cairo with the necessary reinforcements; the city was but poorly defended, and the French forces by the effects of another defeat would scarcely have ventured to oppose the British. With this view General Hutchinson was ordered to advance, and secure a rising ground upon the left; and General Moore was directed, with the troops under his command, to proceed toward the right.

Proper measures were taken to reconnoitre the position of the enemy, and discover if an effort to dislodge them would be practicable or wise. While, by the forces under the command of General Hutchinson, an attempt was made upon the right of the enemy, the 44th regiment was detached to attack a party of the French, who were protected by a howitzer, upon the canal of Alexandria; and they were successful in seizing the post, though a tremend-

bus fire was opened upon them from thirty pieces of cannon. Never was there such a time as this to an army panting for action, and drawn up on the open field.

Every part of the British army was exposed to a galling and destructive fire; but the centre, which was situated on a plain, where there was no interruption by sand hills or inequalities of ground, suffered most extensively; for every shot of the enemy darted into the lines, and produced a dreadful effect. Whole files were swept away at once to destruction, and as fast as the breach was closed another was opened in quick succession. To have advanced would have been complete destruction, and to have retreated would have marred the project in contemplation; but after the strictest investigation was made, and the best counsels were taken, the idea of an attack was abandoned, and the British army, about four o'clock in the afternoon, retired to the heights and position from which

they had driven the French in the former part of the day.

It has already appeared how difficult, and dangerous it would have been to have made a direct attack upon the lines of the French. Their left was protected by the sea, and the only probable method of a successful operation was to turn their right by a wide compass. But in adopting this measure, the assailants must have crossed the canal of Alexandria, and passed over a part of the bed of the lake Mareotis, which, though at that time not inundated, was nevertheless marshy in several places, and unfavourable for the movements of an army. Not being acquainted with the nature of the soil in Egypt, the reflection of the sun, from the nitrous and other saline particles with which it abounds, deceived the eye, and gave even the solid land an appearance of wet and swampy ground.

But independent of this consideration, the heights of Nicopolis appeared to be

fully commanded by the forts Cretin and Cafarelli, and therefore dangerous to be assailed. We are now indeed informed, that the French were apprehensive of their position at Nicopolis being indefensible, if attacked immediately by the British troops; but appearances indicated a different result to Sir Ralph Abercromby, and while he always acted with the utmost tenderness and affection for his army, he is universally allowed to have been intrepid in his conduct, and enterprising in his views.^a

Both parties sustained considerable losses in the action of this day. General Lanusse was wounded, and Sir Ralph Abercromby was in imminent danger, as the horse upon which he rode was shot by the enemy, and fell dead upon the spot. Soon after the battle of the 13th the Arabs acquired confidence in the British; and, notwith-

^a Walsh, p. 83, &c.; Sir Robert Wilson, vol. i, p. 29, &c.; and Reynier, p. 17, &c.

standing the threats of the French generals, supplied the army of Sir Ralph Abercromby with plenty of provisions. Many hands were at work in making entrenchments, and strengthening the camp with every possible mean of defence. The army were happily relieved from the fear of being distressed by the want of water, for they found it readily by digging in the ground; and, according as Sir Sidney Smith had informed them, it is always to be met with in those situations where date trees grow.

About this time the Capitan Bey arrived with several ships on the coast of Abukir; and the commander in chief, having received from the grand signior some Turkish horses of great value, presented each of his general officers with one of those fine steeds. In the meantime the army lost Colonel Bryce of the Coldstream guards. Going his rounds at night, as field-officer for the time, he approached too near a French vedette, and being wounded was taken

prisoner. He languished for some time under his afflictions, and upon the third day breathed his last. In the meantime the fort of Abukir surrendered to the earl of Dalhousie ; but the officers were permitted to retain their swords, and private property was preserved for the owners.

Some unfortunate skirmishes were occasionally taking place ; and General Sir Ralph Abercromby forbade such rash attempts, as they weakened the general force of the army, and were productive of no beneficial effects. On the 20th General Menou arrived at Alexandria, with 9,000 men from Grand Cairo, and he prepared to attack the army of Sir Ralph Abercromby in the morning of the following day. Various appearances induced a belief that Menou had reached the French camp, but while the matter was still in doubt, a friendly sheik of the Arabs dispatched a letter to Sir Sidney Smith, with intelligence of that general's arrival, and of his intended attack.

Though some were inclined to discredit the communication, yet it met with general belief; and it was at least a judicious measure to provide for an event, so probable and important.^a

In the evening of the 20th the centinels and out-posts were carefully stationed; and the army continued to be strongly encamped, upon the favourable position which they had taken up, after returning from the engagement upon the 13th of March. In the centre of the first line, situated upon sand-hills, was Major-general Ludlow, with the guards, and Major-general Coote with the royals, two battalions of the 54th, and the 92^d regiment, which was marching to Abukir, but was brought back by Colonel Napier, when the noise of the firing was heard upon the right near the sea-shore; and in advance within a quarter of a mile from the guards, was Major-general Moore, placed with the

^a Sir R. Wilson, vol. i, p. 46.; and vol. ii, appendix, p. 182.

troops of reserve, which consisted of the 28th and 58th regiments, the 23^d, the 42^d, the flank companies of the 40th, and the Corsican rangers. In this situation was the ruined palace of the Cæsars, and a battery formed in front. Upon the left wing of the army, reaching to the canal of Alexandria, were the 8th and 18th regiments, the 13th and 90th, under the command of Major-general Cradock. The two last were thrown back from the line, and formed so as to face the canal, that they might watch any movements upon the lake Mareotis. A little further on the left was a redoubt, with one twelve pounder. Between this and the 13th regiment, near the point of the lake Abukir, were placed the staff; and the whole extent of the army in a straight direction, was about a mile in length.

Upon the right of the second line were, the Minorca, De Rolle, and Dillon's regiments, commanded by Brigadier-general Stuart. In the centre, next to

those, were the 30th, the 44th, and 89th, under the command of Brigadier-general Doyle. Upon his left was Brigadier-general Finch, with the 26th, and both the mounted and dismounted parts of the 12th dragoons. Lord Cavan commanded the 27th, the 50th, and 79th regiments, which formed the left wing of the second line.^a The cavalry of reserve were placed behind General Moore's troops, and in advance of his position, Captain Maitland was stationed, with several gun-boats near the beach, and the fleet was cruising off the ports of Alexandria.^b

The French army, which was encamped in the strong holds of Nicopolis, was commanded by General Regnier on the right, Rampon in the centre,

^a Si R. Wilson places the 27th, 50th, and 79th regiments in the first line, and in the position facing the canal of Alexandria, instead of the 18th and 90th regiments, according to Captain Walsh.

^b Walsh, see the map facing p. 96 ; and Sir Robert Wilson, vol. i, p. 36, &c.; and map facing p. 48.

and Lanusse on the left. The right wing was composed of the 13th and 85th demi-brigades, together with the 25th, the 61st, and 75th. In the centre were the 21st and 32^d demi-brigades, with two grenadier companies of the 25th and three belonging to the second light battalion. The left division, under Lanusse, consisted of the 4th, the 18th, the 69th, and 88th demi-brigades. The right wing extended toward the canal of Alexandria, and the left approached the sea. Behind the centre was a strong body of cavalry, commanded by General Roize, and in the rear of the whole was a large park of artillery.^p

March 21st the troops were under arms about three o'clock in the morning; and though they were not certain of being attacked by the French; yet their anxiety had been roused, and they rather expected to meet the enemy.

^p Anderson from Menou's orders, p. 265, &c.

Every eye was open, and every ear attentive to give the first notice of an approaching alarm. But the horizon was covered with a thick mist, and no distant object could be seen. Stillness reigned throughout the neighbourhood; and nothing was heard for the space of half an hour, when the report of musketry resounded from the left, and the noise of cannon instantly succeeded. It was a dromedary corps of 130 men, commanded by Colonel Cavalier, whom the French had employed for swiftness. They had parted from the army at the heights of Nicopolis, crossed the canal of Alexandria, by the fortified bridge in their neighbourhood, traversed the bed of the lake Mareotis; and early in the morning seized a small battery near the lake Abukir. It was the taking of this battery, which produced the discharge of musketry; and it was turning the gun of this small fortification against the advanced posts of the British, which

alarmed the army by the firing of a cannon.

No doubt could remain that the enemy was at hand, and General Stuart was upon his march to support the left. But the commander in chief considered the noise as a false alarm; for the French having lately encamped upon that situation, were well acquainted with the ground; and it was scarcely to be supposed, that they would spend their force in the least important quarter. They might indeed have brought an attack upon the whole lines at once; but General Moore's position, supported by the gun-boats near the shore, was too powerful for the left wing of the French army, and too important to be left deliberately unsubdued. It was therefore necessary that the right of the British lines should be first attacked, and that the principal strength of the French army should be directed toward that position.

Such were, probably, the views which

directed Menou; for immediately after the alarm had been given upon the left, shouts and the clashing of arms were heard upon the right, and the division of General Lanusse had almost approached to the position of General Moore. Silly's brigade directed its course toward the redoubt, and that of General Valentin moved along the sea-shore, and attempted to enter the ruined palace of the Cæsars. There the 58th regiment was posted; and when Colonel Houston observed the column of the enemy advancing, he was afraid for an instant to fire, because it was yet dark, and he was apprehensive of wounding or killing some out-posts of the British. But as soon as he discovered the uniform of the French, and saw none of his own countrymen before them, several rounds were fired with such effect, that the brigade quickly retired. But returning to the battle, and attempting to force the redoubt, the 69th demi-brigade was flanked by grape-shot, from a twen-

ty-four pounder, and almost cut to pieces. General Lanusse, while endeavouring to rally the shattered remains of that corps, had one of his limbs shot off by a cannon ball. The rest of Valentin's division forced their way into the ruins, where the 58th British regiment performed prodigies of valour. In the meantime, General Silly's brigade was engaged with the 28th regiment; and there too British valour shone conspicuously. During these trying moments, the 23^d and 42^d regiments flew to the relief of their fellow soldiers, and bravely resisted the foe."

Rampon with the centre division of the French, attempted to turn the left of the guards, and penetrated through the lines of the British; but he was warmly received, and forced to retire with considerable loss. D'Estaing advanced too far into the lines of General Abercromby, and a body of French

troops, being completely overthrown, lost their standard. It was taken by Anthony Lutz, a private soldier in the Minorca or Queen's German regiment. This standard, which was inscribed with many memorandums of victories and trophies, became the subject of much serious and keen discussion. It acquired its principal importance, from the renown which was attached to the body of soldiers, who bore and defended it. To place the transaction in as trivial a point of view as possible, General Rognier represents it as having belonged to a battalion of the 21st demi-brigade, whose numbers had been considerably recruited by Copts from Upper Egypt: thereby insinuating that the dishonour of losing it was scarcely to be ascribed to Frenchmen; and that the glory of obtaining it was less flattering, from the mixed and imperfect state of the battalion to which it belonged. But the appearance of the standard itself indicated its honourable rank; and we

are led to believe that it was defended by that celebrated body of troops, whom Bonaparte himself had distinguished by the name of the Invincible legion.

The Minorca, and 42^d regiments, have each of them zealously endeavoured to assert, and maintain their title to the prowess, and honour of taking this standard. From inquiries which have been made into this subject of keen dispute, it appears, that early in the action of the 21st of March, when the British and French soldiers were fighting with unparalleled bravery, in mixed masses and broken ranks, Major Stirling, of the 42^d regiment, seized a standard from a French battalion, and gave it in charge to Serjeant Sinclair; but this non-commissioned officer being afterwards wounded, the standard was lost. An idea is entertained, that the same ensign was retaken by Anthony Lutz; while the friends of that German hero are desirous of having it understood, that the famous standard was seized by Lutz, and

by Lutz only. We can see nothing in the whole detail, which could prevent the ensign from having been first in the possession of Major Stirling, and then of Anthony Lutz. The eagerness of the French battalion to retake their flag of honour would induce them, in the midst of danger and death, to grasp it from the enfeebled hand of the wounded and fallen serjeant.

At that time of unexampled confusion and ardour, when danger and ambition engaged the mind, and when the smoke of constant volleys obstructed the vision, we are not to be surprised, if the movements of taking the standard by Major Stirling, and retaking it by the enemy, were altogether unobserved by Anthony Lutz, and unknown to the German regiment. The character of the 42^d is so high and well established, that scarcely any thing could add to its lustre. The Minorca regiment, together with the whole troops commanded by Brigadier-general Stuart, fought with

so much valour and success upon that day, and upon every other occasion, that they are worthy of every praise, and none will dare to impeach their honour.^b

In the midst of dismay, when hope scarcely dared to put forth a single ray, Menou had commanded General Roise to make a charge upon the right of the British, and Regnier to support him with infantry in powerful columns. The first charge was made with such fury, by General Boussart, that his troops passed through the ranks toward the rear of the camp; but the horses, entangled among the cords of the tents, or floundering among numerous holes, which were in that part of the field, were many of them destroyed, and the riders put to death. A second charge, under Roise himself, was not more successful; for seeing it impossible

^b Sir R. Wilson, vol. i, p. 58, 59; and vol. ii, append. p. 191, &c.; and Reynier, p. 28.

to withstand so violent a shock, the 42 regiment opened their ranks, and let the cavalry dart through. No sooner was this effected, than facing about, they poured upon them such volleys as strewed the ground with horses, and few of the party returned to join the ranks of the French army.

There was nothing now remaining for the enemy but to retire, and take up their late position upon the heights of Nicopolis. They retreated in good order, and to prevent any movements that might obstruct their progress, they kept up for a while a firing, by detached parties, and sharpshooters; and then on both sides there was opened a heavy cannonade. Fortunate it was for the French army, that the British were destitute of ammunition, which had even failed toward the end of the battle; for if their great guns had now been well supplied, the havoc among the French forces must have been dreadful. The whole space, over which they had to

pass to the camp of Nicopolis, was open to the range of the British guns, and must have exposed them to imminent danger. In this battle they suffered much : many officers and men were killed as well as wounded. Generals Lanusse, Beaudet, and Roise, did not survive the destruction of that day.

It appears that Menou brought into the field of battle, upon the celebrated 21st of March, more than 12,000 troops, and a large body of artillery ; whereas the effective force of the British, upon that day, was little more than 10,000 men. The cavalry of the French was numerous and well appointed ; whereas that of Sir Ralph Abercromby was small in number, a considerable part of them unmounted, and most of the horses, upon which the others rode, were those small and insufficient animals, which had been provided at Marmorice. The French artillery was moved quickly, by swift horses ; but that of the British was dragged painfully and slowly, by the in-

defatigable sailors of the fleet: and this want of horses, in the army of Sir Ralph Abercromby, accounts for the inconveniences, which were sometimes experienced by the occasional deficiencies, both of artillery and ammunition.

The plan of attack, upon the British, was well conceived, but how far it was correctly executed, may be a subject of doubt and inquiry. Perhaps General Regnier ought to have advanced with his division sooner; and to have supported the other parts of the army, which met with such striking losses, by the right and centre of the British. That general, indeed, endeavours to vindicate his conduct, by the plea of having waited for orders from Menou; and even observes, that his first movement toward their relief, was not authorized by the orders of the day, nor directed by any signal from the commander in chief. But that accurate and experienced officer knew well, that circumstances occur, in an extensive action,

which render it expedient, for persons in command, to exercise occasionally their own judgment, by attempting to promote the general good. It is, however, only in contingent events, where an inferior officer should presume to act from his own judgment, and that only upon pressing occasions ; for implicit obedience to the commander in chief is the foundation of true discipline and military order.

But though Menou commanded the right wing of the French army to wait till the right and centre of the British had given way, and then to rush forward, and assist in completing the rout ; yet it is abundantly apparent, that this order was given in the positive belief that the French would be victorious. If however, it was deemed necessary, that the right of Menou's army should assist the centre and left to complete a triumph over the British, it was surely implied, and more incumbent that the wing, commanded by Regnier, should

give its aid, if their fellow soldiers themselves were in danger of being overcome.

But perhaps the principal fault lay in the resolution to march out, and attack Abercromby in his camp. The heights of Nicopolis were then strongly fortified, and had been rendered almost impregnable. It was obvious, that the British army could not remain long upon the peninsula of Abukir; and, if they pushed toward Alexandria, they must have attacked Menou in his intrenchments, and might have been repulsed. The French, we have found, were more numerous, they were not inferior in skill, and many a triumph had adorned their standards. But Menou having been blamed for leaving Alexandria so weak, and for having been so tardy in quitting Grand Cairo, was now, perhaps, resolved to wipe away the reproach of inaction, by a bold and speedy stroke. Having seen the French army so often victorious, he presumed, per-

haps, too much upon their numerous successes; and did not sufficiently appreciate the character of British valour, and British skill.

But the conduct of General Menou, may be accounted for on other grounds than those of rashness and presumption. It might appear, in reviewing the circumstances of Egypt, that as soon as it was known in the camp of the British, that so many of the troops had left Grand Cairo, General Abercromby would seize upon Rosetta, and pursuing his route up the banks of the Nile, would join the army of the grand vizer, under the walls of the Egyptian capital. If these movements should happen, the whole country would be lost to the French, except the district of Alexandria; and it was so blockaded by the British fleet, that the hopes of receiving succours from France were every day diminishing, and sinking into dismay. -

Sir Ralph Abercromby had resolved to attempt the heights of Nicopolis;

for he was not aware of the French numbers, and had no idea that their army would descend upon him. But this design was unknown to Menou, and other councils might have been adopted. If the British troops should join the vizier, at Grand Cairo, the French cause would be hopeless; whereas, if General Abercromby's army were vanquished, on the peninsula of Abukir, their projects in Egypt must be ended. Those, who escaped death upon the field, would be taken prisoners of war, or driven into the deep waters, which were behind them, and on every side.

The battle of the 21st of March was fought with that bravery and skill, which were highly honourable to both parties; and though the French were defeated, yet they retired with honour from the field of conflict. It is true, they were more numerous, and enjoyed advantages which the British did not possess; but throughout the whole action, they also discovered the daring spirit of

enterprise and skill ; and the cavalry, under General Bron, who were stationed on their right flank, within the bed of the lake Mareotis, were successfully employed in annoying the left of the British. By the general orders of Menou, the attack was intended to have been earlier in the morning, than it did in reality take place ; but delays, in such arrangements as these, do sometimes occur without any just imputation of neglect or blame. The engagement with the right of the British army was made indeed too soon after the alarm had been given on the left ; for, if the feint had continued a little longer, the principal attention would have been directed toward that quarter ; and the wing of General Moore would have been left in a less protected and more assailable condition.

But the dromedaries might not be so expeditious as usual, in their course, because the bed of the lake Mareotis, over which they were obliged to pass,

was not well fitted for speedy travelling; and therefore, they were unavoidably later than was expected, in making the false attack upon the battery, and out posts of our position. While they were thus indispensably detained, Lanusse's division of the French army, through the silence and darkness of the night, had advanced within gun-shot of the British lines. Though rather early in this near situation; yet as much was expected from a sudden and unapprehended attack, they deemed it better, we must suppose, to rush on, though somewhat premature, than to run the hazard of being observed by the enemy, and defeated in their plan of secrecy and surprise.

We have much to admire in the cool and determined conduct of the British troops. They fought under a general, whose prudent skill and long experience inspired them with the highest confidence; and they remained defensive in their strong position. If they had pur-

sued a different course, they must have exposed themselves unavailingly to the numerous cavalry and well appointed artillery of the French. Their strict discipline, their native courage, and the judicious conduct of the officers, enabled them to gain a victory, which will long hold a distinguished place in the annals of Great Britain.

General Regnier has remarked, that the left wing of Abercromby's army was not engaged in the battle; but by throwing out an oblique censure upon one party, he gives direct, though unintentional praise to another. It is no small degree of honour, to the right and centre of the British army, that they beat a number of French forces, amounting to more than the whole number of Sir Ralph's effective men; but these distinguished heroes would not accept praise at the expence of the credit and reputation of their fellow soldiers. Lord Cavan and General Cradock's known military conduct raise their be-

haviour, on that day, far above suspicion. When assailed in the morning by the false attack, they had reason for a while to expect a general engagement; and their efforts at that time were no less bold and judicious than they were rapid and successful. They also defied the casual attempts of the French, and kept up a successful cannonade, upon the right of Menou's army, and upon Bron's cavalry, in the bed of the lake Mareotis, which appear to have been equipped with flying artillery. We have every reason to believe, that all the parts of the British army were commanded not to advance, but where the necessary attacks led them; and the divisions of General Cradock and Lord Cavan might be particularly ordered to remain in their station, as it was not known what forces might be held in reserve, and ready to attack them when thrown off their guard.

We are filled with admiration at the conduct and success of the British forces,

from the time of their landing at Abukir, till that day of proud victory, when they beat the French army, and drove them back to the heights of Nicopolis. But when we survey the field of action and pursuit, our joy is damped, and our triumphs are abated, by contemplating the sufferings which were endured, and recount in sorrow the lives which were lost. When the fleet arrived in Egypt the troops amounted to nearly 15,000 rank and file; but immediately after the battle of the 21st of March, it was found that death, sickness, and accidental circumstances, had reduced them more than 4,000. A proportional number of all ranks and distinctions had suffered. Amongst the officers who were killed at Abukir, we have to mention Major Ogle of the 58th regiment, who suffered when a shell burst in one of the boats, at landing, and occasioned considerable loss as well as confusion. The honourable Ensigns Warren and Meade, with another young and promising of-

ficer, also fell on that memorable day. Six officers were killed upon the 13th of March; and upon the 21st of the same month, Colonel Dutens, Major Bisset, and other eight were lost to their country and their friends.

Among the wounded officers were several who lingered for a time under their pains, and at length sunk into the grave. In this number was Sir Ralph Abercromby, the tried and much esteemed commander in chief. When riding in the hottest part of the battle, and giving directions to the army, he was surrounded by the French cavalry and thrown from his horse. While lying upon the ground, and suspected of being an officer by his dress, a dragoon belonging to the enemy levelled a stroke at him with his sabre in passing, but only touched his clothes, or slightly grazed his skin. The French soldier apprehending what an object of value was in his power, speedily wheeled his horse, and made a desperate thrust, by which

the sabre passed between Sir Ralph's side and his right arm.

Danger, and a high feeling of courage gave strength to the aged general's nerves, and being now on his feet, a struggle ensued. In the meantime, the French dragoon was put to death by a soldier of the 42^d regiment, and the veteran commander retained the sword. Striking occurrences happen among the active and the brave. Sir Sidney Smith had broken his own sword in the conflict of that day, and meeting Sir Ralph immediately after the late rencounter, the commander in chief felt a peculiar pleasure in delivering to the hero of St. John d'Acre the sabre which he had wrested from the French dragoon. He complained of a contusion on his breast, which had probably been received in the struggle; but the wound which proved mortal was occasioned by a bullet, which, entering his thigh, pretty far up, took its direction toward the groin, and sunk so deep into the bone

that it could not be extracted. He was not aware of the wound when it was first received, and only became sensible of it from the blood which ran down. No persuasion could induce him to quit the field, till the triumph of the day was secured to Britain.

His mind being then unbent, and his anxious exertions abated, the wound became painful, and himself rather faint. It was dressed by a surgeon on the field, and, being unable to ride on horseback, he was placed in a hammock, and carried to the depository, upon the bank of the lake Abukir. Attended by his friend and aid-de-camp Sir Thomas Dyer, he was then put into a boat, and, with every degree of tenderness, conveyed to Lord Keith, and affectionately treated on-board the admiral's ship, the *Foudroyant*. The eyes of the army eagerly followed him as he was carried from the field of battle, and the warmest wishes of the soldiers attended him in his sickness. He bore his sufferings with great fortitude;

and he dwelt with peculiar admiration and delight upon the conduct of his troops, and the glory of the day. But notwithstanding every attention and medical aid, a fever ensued, and, upon the evening of the eighth day, a mortification put a period to his life. How shall we sufficiently express the high rank in which Sir Ralph Abercromby stood, both as a man and soldier in command; but, in the sequel of this history, his country will speak the language of admiration and gratitude, and we shall then be better enabled to appreciate his value.^a

^a Sir R. Wilson, vol. ii, p. 62; and Walsh, p. 101, &c.; and Baldwin, p. 131, &c.

CHAP. IV.

General Hutchinson succeeds to the chief command . . . Rosetta taken. . . Mareotis inundated. . . . Ramaniah surrenders. . . . The grand vizer's army. . . Cairo capitulates. . . The French sent to France. . . The siege of Alexandria. . . . Its surrender. . . . The army from India. . . The Turks get possession of Alexandria.

UPON the death of Sir Ralph Abercromby, Major-general John Hely Hutchinson succeeded to the chief command. His predecessor had been indulged with the choice of his general officers, and the situation of Hutchinson, as second in command, was a strong evidence that the commander in chief had such confidence in his military powers, that he viewed him as eminently qualified to succeed in directing the operations of the army, in the case of

death or indisposition. This was a distinction of no small moment, and Major-general Hutchinson must have been impressed with gratitude and pleasure ; but when the time arrived that he was to stand forth in so responsible a situation, he felt all the anxieties of a new and important trust. To push forward immediately to Alexandria would have been too daring an attempt ; to remain inactive would have been prejudicial and inglorious ; and therefore, as a preliminary step to future operations, he fortified more strongly the position which his army maintained upon the peninsula of Abukir.

To establish a correspondence with the grand vizer, and to obstruct the communication between the French troops and Grand Cairo, it was necessary to attempt the reduction of Rosetta, and the strong post at Ramaniah. A caravan-sary, situated at the communication of lake Edko with the sea, was seized by the command of Lord Keith, because

the French were using it as a post ; and reconnoitering parties were sent along the canal toward Bedah and the adjoining district. In the meantime the capitan pasha had arrived with three ships of the line, and the small vessels which had been separated from Admiral Keith's fleet on their passage from Marmorice to Abukir. Five thousand troops were landed, and four thousand of them, together with the 58th regiment, and some other detachments, were sent under the direction of Colonel Spencer to besiege Rosetta.

Subsequent reinforcements were detached to the support of this officer, for it was generally expected that Rosetta would not easily be taken. It was of great importance to the French as a post; for while that town remained in their possession, the navigation of its branch of the Nile must be denied to the British, and without its aid they had no means of conveying their artillery and heavy baggage toward Grand Cairo. But,

contrary to every conjecture and expectation, it was abandoned by the French troops upon the 14th of April, and the gates were opened to the British forces. Fort Julian, however, which is situated nearer the mouth of the Nile, was still occupied by the enemy, and must also be delivered from their power. In the meantime, Colonel Spencer had been joined by the forces under the command of Major-general Cradock, and Brigadier-general Doyle. While the principal body of the troops advanced to Al Hamed, the care of Rosetta, and the reduction of Fort Julian, were intrusted to the management of the right honourable the earl of Dalhousie. Several gun-boats belonging to the French took shelter under the fort; but they suffered considerably from the vessels of the British and Turks. The capitan pasha took an active part in reducing Fort Julian, and, after a firm resistance, the garrison surrendered upon the 19th of April.

It appeared to General Hutchinson, that operations of high importance were to be carried forward on the banks of the Nile; and therefore, having committed the troops upon the peninsula of Abukir to Major-general Coote, the second in command, he proceeded to Al Hamed, and there he arrived upon the 24th of April. While he staid with the forces in the neighbourhood of Alexandria, he had deemed it expedient to dismount the Hompesch dragoons, and send them to serve at the fort of Abukir. This order was a severe proceeding toward that military corps, who, as a body of soldiers, had acted on all occasions with fidelity and courage. But, on three successive mornings, a dragoon upon vedette duty deserted to the enemy; and, in the peculiar circumstances of the army, a striking example might be necessary; for the French were employing every possible method to seduce the foreign regiments from the service of the British.

The objects which were in view toward the Nile and Grand Cairo, necessarily diminished the number of forces upon the peninsula of Abukir; and when Major-general Coote was entrusted with the command, they did not exceed 6,000 effective men. But still the position was strong, and the French in Alexandria were every day exposed to additional danger. It was scarcely possible that Admiral Gantheaume's squadron could find access into the ports of Egypt, for Sir John Borlase Warren had joined the right honourable Lord Keith with a squadron of seven sail, and these, together with three ships of war belonging to the capitan pasha, made the whole fleet, blockading the bay of Alexandria, and cruising in the Levant, amount to eighteen ships of the line. The communication too between Grand Cairo and Alexandria, excepting by the painful and dangerous way of the desert, was altogether cut off; for the bed of the lake Mareotis was then covered with water to a

considerable depth. This measure, so distressing to the French, was effected by cutting through the banks of the canal of Alexandria, and opening passages by which the waters might flow from lake Abukir to that of Mareotis. The whole was thus connected with the sea, and the bed of the lake being much lower than the level of the water with which it was to be supplied, a considerable inundation necessarily ensued. Formerly this lake was connected with the sea near Marabu, but the changes of time had filled up the communication. To go, in these circumstances, from Alexandria to Grand Cairo, it was necessary to take a compass round the western point of the lake Mareotis, for the inundation extends far into the desert; and it is said to have stretched, of old times, almost forty miles. True, indeed, the industry of the French soon supplied them with boats upon the lake Mareotis; but we shall afterwards see that they met with obstructions in this use,

ful measure, by the designs and exertions of the British troops.^b

The situation of Alexandria being now so favourable, General Hutchinson proceeded with alacrity in forwarding his designs upon the banks of the Nile. On the 5th of May, the army moved to Al Hamed, where a detachment of the French amounted to nearly 4,000 foot, and 600 cavalry; but not waiting for the approach of the British, they retired to Ramaniah, and took up a strong position behind the canal of Alexandria, with the cavalry on their right, not far from the Nile, and their left protected by a small fort. If Rosetta was expected to make a considerable stand, much more was it believed that the fort of Ramaniah would not be soon surrendered. When the army of the British commander arrived, an engagement indeed took place, but it was rather a success-

^b Sir R. Wilson, vol. i, p. 78, &c.; and Walsh, p. 710, &c.

sion of skirmishes, than the continued exertions of a regular battle. The darkness of the night put an end to the conflict, and the French retreated on their way to Grand Cairo. It was discovered in the morning, that a few soldiers, with the sick and wounded, had been left in the fort, but these surrendered through the course of the day; and it was obvious, that this remaining show of resistance was only intended to amuse the army of General Hutchinson, till the main body of the French had time to escape the pursuit of their enemies.

The detachment under General Stuart was also engaged with parties of Le Grange's forces on the other side of the Nile; but in every situation the troops of Britain and the Ottoman empire were attended with success. Several parties of the French, and a convoy, rich in supplies, were taken by our men; but the progress of the combined forces up the banks of the Nile was slow, as they were frequently under the necessity of wait-

ing for the jerns and boats which conveyed their baggage. About this time information was brought, that a party of the French advancing from Alexandria, upon discovering the British army, had retreated quickly, and were attempting to save themselves in the desert. Brigadier-general Doyle offered his services to pursue them, with a detachment of cavalry amounting to 250, and a brigade of infantry, was to follow, with two field-pieces to support them. As the French columns were far in advance, Colonel Abercromby and Major Wilson rode forward with speed to discover their route. When they arrived within sight of the detachment, they saw them surrounded on every side, and harassed by the Arabs, whose enmity to the French appeared to be lasting and obstinate.

Their situation was hazardous, as well as unpleasant. And though the cavalry had not arrived, and the brigade of infantry was far in the rear, yet Major Wilson thought that they might listen

to favourable terms of surrendering, and be disposed to confide in British protection. Colonel Cavalier, who conducted the false attack on the 21st of March, was present with his Dromedary corps, and was well known to be fruitful in resources, and daring in courage. But what effectual measures could be pursued? for the French had left Ramaniah, and he was then experiencing the distressing power of the Arabs in the desert. Being also in danger from the united forces of the Turks and British, he might perhaps be rather disposed to capitulate upon honourable terms, than run the hazard of an unequal and bloody combat. Having received the acquiescence of Colonel Abercromby, Major Wilson rode up to the party with a white handkerchief upon his sword, as a flag of truce, and made them an offer of returning to France.

A proposal of surrender from so few individuals, had an appearance of contempt, as well as presumption, and Co-

lonel Cavalier spurned at it with threatenings and disdain ; but the offer of returning home affected with joy the hearts of the soldiers, and an aid-de-camp soon afterwards appeared at the British detachment, to request a conference for adjusting the terms of submission. Every thing was arranged to the satisfaction of both parties, and thus a number of French soldiers, amounting to more than 600, yielded themselves prisoners to a small handful of British troops.^c

In the meantime the army of General Belliard was considerably augmented, for the garrisons of the various places of strength in the Delta had retired, as they were directed, upon the approach of the grand vizer. General Donzelot and his troops had descended from Upper Egypt; and Le Grange having retreated with his army from Ramaniah, the whole met

^c Walsh, p. 124, &c.; and Sir R. Wilson, vol. i, p. 124, &c.

at Grand Cairo, and formed one body of soldiers, ready to act with firmness and united strength. During these transactions the vizer had arrived at Belbeis, and anxieties for his safety were felt among the British soldiers. They were apprehensive that Belliard with his augmented army would go out to meet the Turkish forces under the command of his highness, before his junction with General Moore and the troops whom he conducted. This preconceived opinion acquired strength from the conduct of the French general, whose advanced guards extended beyond Bulak. Under the fears which those views and sentiments inspired, a confidential messenger was sent to the camp of the grand vizer, to guard him against falling into the apprehended snare.

But the hope of plunder, which ever preponderates in the mind of a Turkish army, had inflamed their desire of entering Grand Cairo; and he, who knows the state of an Ottoman camp, will not

be surprised to find, that his highness, with all the dignity of office, durst not presume to check their ardour, nor oppose their designs. Desertion, and perhaps tumult, would have flowed from such an attempt; and the grand vizer himself was not without hopes that he might vanquish Bellard's army, and enter the capital of Egypt in triumph. The messenger returned to the British standards without effecting the object of his mission, and the Turks and the French met in the field. Four thousand infantry, with one thousand horsemen, and near thirty pieces of cannon, were sent from Cairo to engage the army of the grand vizer, and drive them back to Salehiah. But an account of this movement was secretly conveyed to the camp of his highness, and measures were quickly adopted to defeat the design.

Upon the 16th of May, Tahir Pasha, with a detachment of Turks, met the advanced guard of the French, in a wood of date trees, and there, at the dawning

of the day, the hostile troops engaged. Additional parties of considerable strength arrived from the camp of the grand vizier, and the ardour of the battle increased. Much were the French galled by the cavalry of the enemy, for the Mamlukes of Ibrahim Bey had joined the standard of the grand vizier. The conflict was continued for several hours, and Al Hanka rendered famous by the triumph of the Turks over the French. The engagement was not general, and the loss was comparatively small; but the successful issue inspirited the Ottoman army, and the defeat of Belliard increased his anxieties.^a

Immediately after this encouraging event, the grand vizier advanced with his army, and encamped at Benerhasset. Thither Major-general Hutchinson and the capitan pasha went to visit him, and concert measures for the siege of Grand

^a Sir R. Wilson, vol. i, p. 160, &c.; and Capt. Walsh, p. 138, &c.

Cairo. Whatever delusive ideas his highness, and the army under his command, might entertain and cherish, about their own power and address to possess themselves of the capital of Egypt; yet the British commander in chief could not allow them without his co-operation to hazard so great an attempt. Though Major Hope and Captain Leake of the royal artillery, together with Captain Lacey of the engineers, were in the camp of the grand vizer, and aided him with their skilful advice; yet General Hutchinson was fearful of a rash and presumptuous attack upon Grand Cairo.

Self-confidence puffed up, and invigorated by the late success at Al Hanka, might induce the grand vizer to aim at the glory of taking that city without foreign aid, or the ungovernable avidity of his troops might impel him to open an attack; but General Hutchinson knew that he was in great danger of failing in the attempt. He was also well aware that the French would spill

the last drop of their blood before they would surrender to an enemy, whose character was severe, and whose cruelties had often been felt. In the camp of his highness, the British commander in chief and the capitan pasha were received with ceremonious attention and marks of high respect. In the best stile of eastern magnificence, they were treated with feasts, and amused with tournaments. In a council of state, it was finally arranged in what manner the attack was to be made on Grand Cairo, and the exertions were to be mutual between the combined armies.

When the Ottoman empire was yet but forming, it was cherished by victories, and the sword gave it birth. In its progress toward perfection, the sultan marched at the head of his own armies, and held sittings of the divan in the camp and on the field of battle. When the nation became less warlike, the grand signior remained at home shut up in the seraglio, and exchanged the toils of

a soldier's life for the enervating pleasures of a luxurious court. But still the ancient habits and shew of royalty remained at the head quarters of the Turkish army; and still with the grand vizer do the officers of state go out to battle, and in his camp divans are held. Having settled, in a meeting of this sort, the necessary adjustments for the attack on Cairo, the British general and the capitan pasha returned upon the 29th of May to the camp at Algarn. Next day the Caya of Osman Bey arrived at the head quarters of General Hutchinson, announcing the approach of Murad Bey's army to join the British forces; and the most ample assurances were given, both by General Hutchinson and the capitan pasha, that they should be received with pleasure, and treated becomingly.

Tambourgi, the surname of their commander Osman Bey, is descriptive of the mean situation from which he was raised to so important a rank. He had formerly filled the office of drummer among

the Mamluke soldiers, but possessing active and enterprising qualities, he was recommended by Murad Bey to succeed him at his death, which happened by the plague, as he was waiting an opportunity of joining the British. Our researches have already made it appear, that the peace, which Murad made with the French, was a peace of necessity and not of friendship. In a letter to Sir Sidney Smith, which prudential reasons have hitherto prevented from being altogether made public, he expresses a dislike to the French, because they had contracted the bounds of his power; and, when speaking of the Ottoman government, he feelingly describes the sufferings, which he had endured from people, who professed the same faith, and had vowed to be brethren. Partial to his own conduct, and blind to the inroads of his ambition, he overlooked the disobedience and rebellion of which he had been guilty toward the grand signior, and brooded over his own misfortunes

and toils. Beautifully, in the bold and highly figurative language of the east, does he paint the affecting and peculiarly impressive sorrows which he himself had felt. ‘Melancholy,’ says he, ‘is it to reflect, that the arrow which has stuck in the eagle’s wing, was an arrow which was made of an eagle’s feather.’^c

General Hutchinson and the grand vizier began now to move their troops, by previously concerted marches, on their respective sides of the Nile, that they might appear at the same time before the suburbs of Grand Cairo. Having arrived at the place destined for making their attack, and General Hutchinson being strengthened by various arrivals of troops from the camp, on the peninsula of Abukir, the necessary arrangements were made for laying siege to the town. Upon the 22^d of

^c Capt. Walsh, p. 140, &c. ; and Sir R. Wilson, vol. i, p. 104, &c.

June, Belliard, the commandant of Grand Cairo, having been alarmed at his perilous situation, proposed a conference to treat about surrendering the city. Brigadier-general Hope was deputed for the British interest, Mohammed Pasha for the vizer, Isaac Bey for the capitan pasha, and Osman Bey for the Mamlukes. Generals Morand and Donzelot together with Tareyre, a chief of brigade, were the persons employed in behalf of the French. Captain Taylor was appointed secretary to the conference; and, upon the sixth day of their meetings and consultations, a convention was finally agreed upon and signed, by which Grand Cairo was to be surrendered.

In the course of seventeen days the French were to be ready for departing, and ships were to be provided by the combined powers for carrying them in safety to one of their own ports. Privately it was stipulated, that as soon as they were embarked, their arms were

to be put into the custody of the captains who commanded the ships; and were not to be returned till the men were landed in France. Brigadier-general Oakes was stationed at Rosetta to superintend the embarkation, and in the first week of August they sailed from Egypt for their native country. General Moore commanded the British, and the Capitan Pasha the Turkish forces, who escorted the French from Cairo to the place of embarkation. The grand vizer remained in possession of the Egyptian capital, and the British commander in chief tarried in the house of the imperial consul, the respectable Rosetti, to make some necessary arrangements, and provide for the safety of the Mamlukes and beys.

While these things were transacting in the interior, Major-general Coote was not idle in his camp before Alexandria, and the fleet of the British still continued to watch the Egyptian shores. Admiral Gantheaume was not permitted

to approach the ports of Alexandria. The transports, which were committed to his charge, were taken, but the ships of war were so fortunate as to escape. In these were the troops which France intended for the reinforcement of Alexandria; while on-board the transports were artists, comedians, gardeners, and in short a multitude of people selected and prepared for improving Egypt in useful arts, and for amusing the inhabitants even amidst scenes of danger and desolation. During this time General Menou was providing for the safety of his army, and the defence of Alexandria.

To cover his troops from the threatened attacks of the British, the French commander in chief had ordered a cut to be made through the canal of Alexandria, which permitted the water of the lake Marcotis to rush into the plain, which was extended in front of his camp. When General Coote observed the stratagem, he was alarmed for its

effects, as it was uncertain whether a lake might not be thus formed, between him and the position of the enemy. His invention was at work, and the engineers were consulted, to discover in what manner its progress and extension could be best prevented. As the plain was nearly on a level with the bed of the lake Mareotis, it was suggested, that a strong bank must be formed, so as to confine the water within certain bounds. The work was performed during the darkness of many successive nights, and was not impeded by any interruption from the enemy. It was strongly defended by the British; and it is probable, that for fear of snares, and well-digested schemes of opposition, the French durst not venture even in the night to attack the labourers in performing their duty.

The British before Alexandria had received several supplies and reinforcements from Europe; and although occasional succours had also been thrown

into the city ; yet the army of General Menou was considerably dispirited, and some degree of anxiety was excited for a proper and necessary supply of provisions. The love of money induced the Arabs to attend the markets ; but the supplies might be cut off by the progress and ingenuity of the British. Under these circumstances, the commander in chief refused to admit into Alexandria the artists and comedians, who had been sent from France. If he deemed it imprudent to consume the limited provisions of the city by the increase of unnecessary inhabitants, so, with the view of reducing the quantity of food in Alexandria, and harassing the army, Admiral Lord Keith refused to let the members of the institute, and their numerous attendants depart for Europe, as Menou proposed.

As the French were now confined to a single spot of Egypt, it might have been supposed, that they would have expressed a readiness to return home

upon honourable terms; but Menou refused to receive the offers which General Belliard had accepted, and vowed to prefer a grave among the ruins of Alexandria. He obstinately resisted every communication by land, that the nature of his situation might not be discovered; and he was loud in condemning General Belliard for surrendering so easily the town and dependencies of Grand Cairo.

While General Hutchinson tarried in the capital of Egypt, after his army had departed for Rosetta, he received dispatches from London, which made him acquainted with the sensations of joy, which had been manifested by the people in Britain, when they were informed of the bold and successful conduct, which their countrymen had displayed upon the peninsula of Abukir; many marks of approbation had been emulously bestowed, and by the favour of the sovereign, Major-general Hutchinson is now to be distinguished by the appel-

lation of Sir John Hely Hutchinson, knight of the bath. In addition to this title of honour, he was appointed Lieutenant-general of the Mediterranean. On the 30th of July he arrived at Rosetta; and his health having suffered by anxieties and fatigue, he went on-board Lord Keith's ship on the 2^d of August, and remained there in the bay of Abukir till the 15th of the same month.

The time had now arrived when the attempt must be made to take Alexandria. A triumphant entrance into that city was the last effort, which was required to expel the French from Egypt; and to perfect the laurels which had been gradually adorning the British warriors. It had appeared to General Coote, that the best point of attack was on the peninsula of Marabu, to the westward of Alexandria: and he was confirmed in this idea, by finding, upon inspection, that the lake Mareotis, in some parts of that situation, reached to little

more than the distance of half a mile from the sea-shore. Sir John Hutchinson resumed the command of the camp; and Major-general Coote was appointed to direct the operations and military plans, which were to be executed upon the peninsula of Marabu.

The western division of troops consisted of about 4,000 rank and file, with a due proportion of artillery and engineers. The French, for some time past, had been alarmed by British gun-boats on the lake Mareotis; and those, which they themselves had dragged across the peninsula into that situation, were then much annoyed and kept in check. The troops, under the command of General Coote, were all embarked in their proper boats by nine o'clock in the evening of August the 16th, and they pushed along the lake toward the place of landing; but were not able to approach the shore till about ten o'clock of the following day. Near the place where it was intended to land the troops, a party of

the enemy's forces were posted on the shore, and had at their command several pieces of artillery. There, it was evident, a landing could not easily be effected; and therefore a diversion was appointed to be made toward that quarter with the troops under the command of Major-general Finch. He approached the shore, but in that hovering manner, that while he attracted their notice, his men were not unnecessarily exposed to the fire of the enemy. During this successful stratagem, the rest of the troops landed in safety, two miles to the westward, and almost opposite to the fort of Marabu.

In that situation, upon the very brink of the lake, there commences a rugged rising ground, full of rocks which are peculiarly hard in their texture. They derive their durable quality, from the siliceous matter, with which they abound; and from their nearness to Alexandria, as well as from the number of quarry-holes, which are

frequent on the ridge, it is more than probable that stones were carried thence for erecting buildings in the city. To draw the attention of the French, in some degree, from the division of the British troops in the west, General Sir John Hutchinson ordered an attack to be made on the whole line of the enemy, upon the heights of Nicopolis. A green hill, in advance of Menou's right, was to be taken by General Cradock; the 36th and 50th regiments were to push on toward some redoubts; and the 92^d, together with two battalions of the 20th, were to fly with assistance wherever it should be wanted. Every part of the attack was executed with propriety, and General Moore having taken possession of a tapering sand-hill, he thence reconnoitred the enemy's situation, and was assisted in forming an opinion by the scientific knowledge of Captain Bryce. But having obtained this advantage by the possession of the hill, he found it expedient to abandon that situ-

ation, because it was completely exposed to the direct attack, and cross fires of the enemy.

Upon this retreat, the French sallied out with considerable strength to regain the whole ground which they had lost; but in defence of the green hill, Colonels Spencer and Lockhart, at the head of the 30th regiment, displayed much skill, and performed feats of valour. In the meantime General Coote was actively employed in preparing batteries to attack and destroy the fort of Marabu. The firing was opened with effect, and even among the ruins of the building, the garrison exerted themselves with vigour, and made no offer to surrender or capitulate. To save the unnecessary effusion of blood, Lieutenant-colonel Darby, and Captain Walsh, aid-de-camp to Major-general Coote, were sent to summon the garrison, and urge the folly of resistance. After some hesitation, the articles of capitulation were signed, and the place was surrendered.

- The main body of the army was strongly posted upon an abrupt ridge of rocky hills, which ran across the peninsula, from the lake Marcotis to the sea-shore. General Xazonches was placed in the centre; Epler upon the right, protected by the sea and several pieces of cannon; and General Delgorgues had the direction of the left, which was defended by the lake, and two small batteries well mounted. Besides these the interstices and front were completely supplied with flying artillery. The whole presented a formidable appearance; and an attack upon a place of such strength was deemed hazardous in the extreme; but the lines of the enemy must be forced, or no progress could be made toward taking the town. By dawn of day, therefore, upon the 22^d of August, the British troops were under arms, and began to move forward in separate columns. The guards, under the command of Major-general Lord Cavan, marched in two bodies, on the

side toward the inundation, and Major-general Ludlow's brigade moved in column near the sea-shore. General Finch's troops were appointed to act as a reserve, and in advance there were cavalry, riflemen, sharp-shooters, and artillery. Upon the right, on the lake Mareotis, were four gun-boats, and on the left, in the old harbour of Alexandria, were six sloops of war.

Thus did the army of Major-general Coote march toward the position of the enemy, while the vessels on either side kept rather in advance. When arrived at a proper distance from the lines, a tremendous, and continued roar of musketry and cannon threw the French into consternation. Never, perhaps, was such a scene exhibited, among all the striking displays of military arrangements. Scarcely could such a chain of remarkable circumstances ever be combined, as those which rendered this movement of General Coote's army,

grand and awful. They marched in hostile array along a narrow slip of land, bounded upon both sides by an expanse of water ; and while the troops fired incessant volleys upon the lines of the enemy, which were directly in front, the cross fire of the gun-boats and sloops increased the destruction, and made terrible the appearance and effects of that day. Can we be astonished that the French retired from such multiplied messengers of death ? and does it divest them of a claim to genuine courage, when we venture to assert, on undoubted authority, that they retired, till they found shelter under the walls of Alexandria ? To enjoy such advantages, as the British did, was derived from the circumstances and situation of the peninsula of Marabu ; to seize upon these advantages, and turn them to the best account, was owing to the judgment and foresight of General Coote ; and to retreat from such numerous and certain

agents of destruction, was rather wise than timid in the French.^a

The British army now formed an encampment upon the ancient Necropolis of Alexandria, or the town without the city, where formerly the people deposited their dead. The forces of General Coote were reinforced by detachments from the camp on the east of the city; and General Hutchinson himself, having visited the army at their new position, praised their conduct and admired their success. But here the troops were not to remain in a state of inaction, and some of them were dispatched to attack a redoubt of the enemy, as a mean of preparing the way for advancing to the city. Captain Stephenson of the navy strengthened the position of the British, by several ships of war, which he anchored a-head of their left, in the old port of Alexandria. Both sides of the town were ha-

^a Captain Walsh, p. 200, &c.; and maps, plate 36 & 37.

passed by the British troops, and the first parallel on the west of the city was almost finished, when an armistice was concluded.

Seeing himself in imminent danger, General Menou requested to have the space of three days for preparing terms of surrender. On the evening of the last day, a messenger arrived at the camp of Sir John Hutchinson, soliciting the further indulgence of thirty-six hours. It was thus evident, that the hope of supplies arriving from France was yet unextinguished in the French army. Before their sun of success and triumph set in the darkness of defeat and surrender, they looked with delusive expectation upon the last rays of their departing glory. The solicited extension of the truce was rejected, and the renewal of hostilities sternly appointed. This was an event which General Menou durst not provoke; and therefore he assured the British commander in chief, that he was still pre-

paring to surrender. A short space was allowed for drawing up articles of capitulation ; but when these were formed and presented, they gave a decided proof of a design to protract and temporise.

In one of the articles it was proposed, that the truce should be continued for eighteen days, and then the French army would surrender, if no aid had previously arrived ; but if they received reinforcements and supplies, they should then be at liberty to renew hostilities, and fight for the recovery of Egypt. Certainly no such proposal was ever made, in circumstances like those where Menou was placed. Major-general Coote was ready to open the most tremendous batteries upon the west side of Alexandria, and it was unprotected, but by mouldering walls, and intimidated soldiers. On the east the French were hemmed in by a fortified camp of the British, and the lake Marcotis was wholly possessed by the combined

powers; the ports of Alexandria were blockaded by the British, and every thing seemed to promise them success. Could it ever then be supposed, that Sir John Hely Hutchinson, by withholding a stroke, which was ready to crush the enemy, would give the French in Alexandria time to recover strength and acquire additional means of opposing, and perhaps finally resisting the combined powers? The terms which Menou presented were refused with indignation; and in the agonies of shame and disappointment, he agreed to the stipulations which he had formerly rejected, though accepted by General Belliard, for the surrender and evacuation of Grand Cairo. Brigadier-general Hope too was the person employed to adjust the terms of capitulation, and upon the 2^d of September, the British having taken possession of the French lines, the combined forces became masters of all Egypt.

An account of this splendid and important victory was conveyed to the court of London, by Colonel Abercromby, from Sir John Hely Hutchinson; and from Admiral Lord Keith, by Sir William Sidney Smith. These distinguished officers were received with cordial respect; and the news, which they bore, diffused joy through the various ranks of the people. Whatever was the primary object of the French expedition to Egypt, their defeat at Alexandria compelled them to return home with disappointment and disgrace. The danger to the British settlements in India, which was thus, perhaps, prevented or set aside, could not fail to bestow pleasure upon the attentive inquirer, and the friend of his country; but the general bursts of joy, which appeared throughout the realm, were chiefly occasioned by the national feeling of proud superiority; and the having been able to overcome the French in a distant

country, where they were posted in great strength.

The circumstances; which attended the capitulation of Alexandria, lead us to review the surrender of Grand Cairo, which was an easy acquisition; but it would be unjust, as well as ungenerous, to attribute improper views to the conduct of General Belliard. The dissatisfaction, which Menou expressed, at the evacuation of that city, may be ascribed in part to the ardour of his zeal for the public service; and in some measure it may have been occasioned by the highly responsible situation, in which he was placed. Every where in the army, cabals were formed against his proceedings; and it was natural for him to suspect, that Grand Cairo might have been surrendered from sinister views.

To form a just estimate of the conduct which General Belliard pursued, we must view with accuracy the circumstances in which he was placed. When the combined forces had ad-

vanced to Giza and Bulak, there was no communication to be held, either with the ports of Egypt, or with the coast of Syria. A part of the Indian army having already arrived, the rest was daily expected, and the inhabitants of Egypt had never been true friends to their new masters, nor the French government. Thus situated, there was no probable chance of a happy issue ; and though resistance for a while might have had a show of courage and resolution ; yet perseverance in the defence of Grand Cairo would have been wanton cruelty, and a fruitless profusion of human blood. A more stubborn mind, or a general determined upon a display of firmness, rather than the exercise of prudence and humanity, might have stood in defiance, till his army had essentially suffered by a siege or by famine ; but then if the opposing commander had been influenced by sentiments equally inflexible, the shattered remains would have been cast into con-

finement; and under such circumstances, a prison in Egypt would have been equivalent to death.

When we contemplate the evacuating of Egypt by the French army, we are at a loss in what terms to speak of the soldiers and sailors of our country. The nature of a general history prevents us from specifying every feat of valour, or every name which deserves praise; but the united efforts of those British heroes, who expelled the French from Egypt, will stand in the records of gratitude and fame.

When Alexandria fell, as well as when the naval battle of the Nile was fought, the thanks of parliament, and the joy of the people were quickly wafted to the east. Lieutenant-general Sir John Hutchinson, K.B. among other effusions of bountiful feeling, was created a British peer, by the name and title of Baron Hutchinson of Alexandria, and of Knocklofty in the county of Tipperary. Admiral Lord Keith, who was already honoured

with an Irish title, was then favoured with a right to sit and vote in the British house of lords; and Major-general Coote, who was second in command at the taking of Alexandria, was graciously invested with the order of the bath. To express his sense of British merit and fidelity, the grand signior established an order of knighthood, denominated the crescent. The honour of this rank he conferred upon the principal officers, both military and naval; and gold medals, with suitable emblems, were distributed among all the officers of the army. A palace was appointed to be built at Constantinople, for the residence of the British ambassador, as a mark of national gratitude and esteem. The whole regiments, which had been in Egypt, were allowed by the proper authorities at home, to carry the figure of a sphinx upon their colours, and to have the word Egypt inscribed for their motto.

When General Hutchinson succeeded

to the office of commander in chief, he ascended a station, which was as difficult as it was full of importance. If he should be so fortunate, as to bring the expedition to a happy conclusion, there was some danger, that his merit would be cast into the shade, by the great achievements, and justly exalted character, of Sir Ralph Abercromby. But if his efforts, however deserving, should lead to disasters, and not to success, still a reference would be had to his predecessor in office, and the opinion maintained, that if the veteran general had been in life, the French power in Egypt must have fallen. To stand in the place of him, who was so much the idol of his army, was a severe trial for a younger officer, and a less experienced commander ; but notwithstanding all those perils and difficulties, General Hutchinson was successful in driving the French from Egypt ; and amidst many honours and preferments, he returned to Great Britain lord of Alexandria.

Wherever the triumphs are contemplated, which Great Britain obtained with such splendour in Egypt; in whatever language they are recorded; and whithersoever the fame of those deeds shall be wafted, there the conduct and character of General Sir Ralph Abercromby of Tullibody will be viewed with reverence and held in esteem. Being able to produce a long line of respectable ancestors, he was deservingly anxious, rather to add to the dignity than diminish the lustre of his father's house. He was by profession a soldier, and as he rose through the progressive ranks of a military officer, he acquired reputation, and excelled in fame.

In the war of Britain, with America, he bore a conspicuous part, and at length was commander in chief of the forces in Scotland. During the late revolutionary movements of France, he fought with high approbation in Holland; he commanded the army in Ireland with true

patriotism; and we have reviewed his conduct at Abukir.

He was eminently endowed with those valuable qualities, which constitute the great general, and the distinguished commander. He possessed a clearness of conception, which enabled him to form accurate plans; and he was blessed with a soundness of judgment, which assisted him to draw just conclusions, and prosecute with success practicable schemes. Having prosecuted studies with the view of practising at the bar; his mind was well cultivated; and thus to the experience of a general, he added the acute discernment of a polished scholar. He was conspicuous in courage, and firm in action; but the boldness of enterprise never made him forgetful of tenderness to his army, nor humanity in the day of victory.

In public or in private, he was the soldiers friend; and the voice of misery, which never reached his ear in vain, was conveyed with additional tendencies of

compassion when it came from an afflicted soldier, who had bled, or become old, in the cause of his country. He possessed the interesting and valuable art of gaining the affections of his army; and never was there a general in the field of battle, who enjoyed more completely than he the love and the confidence of his soldiers.

But the superior conduct of Sir Ralph Abercromby was not confined to the public departments of his office, nor limited by the boundaries of martial connections. He carried with him, into private life, a distinguished steadiness of conduct, and an amiable deportment in all his pursuits. The friends of his youth were not forsaken in advanced years; and never did sordid, or ungenerous motives drive, from his paternal farms, the persons, or the descendants of those who held them in former days. His domestics served him with the sincere attachment, and the permanent regards, of former, and less changeable

times. In all the family relations of life, he was dutiful and kind. To the general excellence of his character, he added a love of decorum; and pious respect for the duties of religion adorned the general conduct of his life.

Though far advanced in years, he was roused with the vigour of his country; and during the late alarming war, he undertook and suffered the hardships of the field, at that feeble period of life, when the brave and patriotic are even willing, and permitted to retire. He had long been honoured with the esteem of his sovereign, and by royal favour had formerly been invested with the order of the bath. After his victory in Egypt, a monument, with descriptive emblems, was appointed to be erected to his honour, in the cathedral church of S^t. Paul, London; and the king, in affectionate regard, was pleased to command that the famous French standard, which was taken in Egypt, upon the 21st of March, A. D. 1801, should be deposited upon

his tomb. Further to illustrate the royal favour, and the high sense of his merits, the lady of the brave, but departed general, was dignified with the title of Baroness Abereromby, of Abukir and Tullibody, with remainder to the heirs-male of her deceased Lord. Other remunerations accompanied this gift of honour, and the national feelings were indulged by these generous marks of royal and public favour.

The body of Sir Ralph Abercromby was removed from the bay of Abukir, and upon Wednesday the 29th of April, A. D. 1801, it was deposited in a vault at the north-west bastion of Fort St. Elmo in the island of Malta. He was buried with all the honours of war, and the sorrow expressed was not assumed, but entered deep into the soul. Every thing both in form and in substance being in unison with mourning, the parole of the day was Abercromby, and the counter-sign grief. An epitaph, written by Fra. Glascchino Na-

varro, who was librarian to the order of Malta, is inscribed upon a black marble tomb-stone, which lies upon the grave of the much lamented general.^a

^a Memoriz

Radulphi Abercrombi Scoti,
Equitis Ordinis a Balneo Dicti,
Viri

Probitate Mentis, Magnitudine, Animo Maximo,
Et Armis in Bello Americano atque Hollandico
Clarissimi ;

Quem

Georgius III. Magnæ Britannię Rex,
Populis Plaudentibus,

Britannici Terrestris Exercitus ad Mare Mediterr.
Ducem Supremum dixit.

Quo munere, *Egyptiacam Expeditionem* conficiens,
Oram Egypti Universam,

Gallorum Copiis strenuis undique Adversantibus,

Uno Impetu occupavit, tenuit, [pressit.

Idemq. progrediens earum Conatus non semel fregit, com-
Donicum Signis cum Galle conlatis

Cruento Prælio ad Alexandriam commisso,

Anno MDCCCI die XXI. M Martii,

In primâ Acie, in ipso Victoris sinu,

Letale vulnus femore excipiens,

Magno suorum desiderio extinctus est,

Die XXVIII ejusdem mensis, Anno ætatis suæ LXVIII.

Dux, Rei Bellicæ Peritia,

Providentia in Consulendo, Fortitudine in Exsequendo,

Ac Fide integra in Regni et Regis Gloriam

Spectatissimus.

Hunc Rex, Hunc Magna Britannia, flevit.

Upon the very day that the French
commander in chief agreed to the terms

Henricus Pigot
Propositus Gen. Regia Potestate
Prædiar. Militum Britannicorum
In hac Insulâ Consistentium,
Optimi Ducis Cineribus, eodem Anno, die xxix Aprilis,
Funere publico huc inlatis,
Bege merenti, Faciendum Curavit
Pietatis Causâ.

A Translation of the preceding.

To
The memory
Of Sir Ralph Abercromby,
A native
Of North Britain, and Knight of the Bath ;
Conspicuous
For integrity, greatness of mind, and genuine courage,
Having
Appeared with distinguished lustre,
In the wars of America and Holland, he was appointed
By
King George III, to command
An army
In the Mediterranean,
Which also went on an expedition into Egypt ;
And the people of Britain applauded the choice.
He landed
On the Egyptian shore, in opposition to

for surrendering Alexandria, Major-general Baird arrived at Rosetta with the

The best troops of France,
And continued
To advance in triumph,
Till
Upon the 21st of March, A. D. 1801;
While in the Van of his army,
He received a wound in his thigh,
Which proved mortal,
Upon the 28th of the same month,
In
The 68th year of his age.
He
Was a general,
Eminent in skill, prudent
In projecting, and firm in accomplishing,
His plans :
Respected for integrity, and revered for patriotism,
He died
Lamented by his king,
and
Honoured
by
His country.
—
Over the ashes
Of
This valuable officer,
Which were deposited here,
In public and solemn funeral April 29 A. D. 1801,

Indian troops. That army was composed of forces from the different presidencies of India, and of various corps from the Cape of Good Hope. Their destination was to have landed at Suez, and thence to have proceeded wherever the state of the country might require; but the dangerous navigation of the Red sea concerted the plan. The first division, which landed on that station, found it expedient to re-embark; and Lieutenant-general Lloyd, who arrived at the head of the Arabian gulf, in the month of June, A. D. 1801, marched with considerable difficulty across the desert to the Delta, and several of his men perished by the way. The principal part of the army, which amounted to nearly

Henry Pigot,
 Commander in chief of the British forces
 In Malta,
 Commanded, with affectionate regard,
 This stone and inscription
 To
 Be placed.

6,000 rank and file, was landed at Jidda, under the direction of Sir Home Popham, and crossed the gulf to Cossir, where they arrived upon the 17th of May.

They traversed the desert to Kenah, and descending the Nile, they appeared at Giza on the 7th of August. If they had continued their march toward Alexandria, they might have shared in the glory of expelling the French from the ancient city of the Macedonian hero; but the troops stood in need of a little repose, and they did not reach Rosetta till the power of Menou was humbled in the dust. We feel for the Indian army, that they should have suffered so many dangers by sea, and endured so many hardships by land, without being able to obtain the satisfaction of joining in a defeat, which will perpetuate the name of British councils and British conduct. But still we are to ascribe to the Indian army, a part of that success, which the combined forces of Britain and Constantinople enjoyed. That army was ex-

pected, and the fear of its arrival strongly co-operated, with other causes, in leading General Belliard to surrender with so much ease, the strong position of Grand Cairo. There is also another advantage which sprung from the speedy arrival of so large an army : it shews in a striking point of view what assistance a British colony in Egypt might derive from their country's settlements in India ; and it also proves how easily a powerful army in the former might disturb and invade our possessions in the latter.^b

As soon as the capitulation of Alexandria was signed, and the necessary arrangements for departure made, the troops of Britain and France were conveyed with all possible speed from the shores of Egypt to the respective places of their destination. Upon the 18th of September, the keys of Alexandria were delivered to the capitan pasha ; but a

^b Walsh, p. 187, 188, &c.

division of British soldiers, under the command of Major-general the earl of Cavan, was retained as a temporary garrison for the city. The court of London had declared, that their conduct toward Egypt was in good faith with the Ottoman government, and that territorial aggrandizement was not the object of their pursuits. In fulfilment of this sacred promise, Egypt was delivered to the government of a pasha, and the usual functionaries were all to be restored.

As a proof of British sincerity, the government of Alexandria was put into the power of the capitan pasha ; for, at the surrender of Fort Julian and Grand Cairo, jealousies had appeared on the part of the Turkish commanders. The British were certainly the principal agents in wresting Egypt from the power of the enemy, and the French were naturally led to give them the preference in every transaction. Their honour and clemency had justly excited more confi-

dance in times of defeat and surrender, than the systematic and savage cruelty of the Ottoman troops ; but the British commanders wisely endeavoured to prevent any subject of dispute, and secure the good opinion of the Turkish army. But while the earl of Cavan industriously avoided the giving of offence to the Ottomans, yet he had high interests to pursue, which required a British force in the town of Alexandria, and the measure was agreed to without commotion.

The French, it is true, had been lately expelled ; but their mind was still bent upon Egypt, and still they had ships of war skulking and watching in the Mediterranean sea. If Alexandria, in this situation, were totally left to the government and defence of the Turks, a feeble force from France might again enter its ports, and burst open its gates. Thus the same danger would recur to Britain, and the late victories would have been obtained in vain. It was therefore necessary to retain a force in

Alexandria, which was sufficient to preserve it in safety till the tumults of war should subside, and the arrangements of peace secure its protection.

There was yet another weighty and honourable reason, for leaving a British garrison, for a certain period in the town of Alexandria. There existed a deadly hatred between the beys of Egypt and the court of Constantinople, and certainly the Mamluke chiefs had been undutiful to the Ottoman government; but British fidelity stood pledged, that if Egypt were recovered, the Mamlukes should be restored to their rank and condition in the realm. In this promise it was implied, that they should renounce and abandon every usurped prerogative, and return to their ancient and legitimate station. But the Turks had secretly resolved to annihilate the Mamluke power, and, with the low cunning of a degenerate court, they attempted to insnare and carry them to Constantinople.

Under pretence of friendship, and a shew of courtly favour, they were invited to go into the boat of the capitan pasha, and be conveyed with his suit to a festival party on-board a ship in the port of Alexandria. But the scheme being discovered, the indignant Mamlukes flew to arms, and several of them were killed in the act of resistance. The utmost displeasure was shewn at the conduct of the Turks, and British resentment made the pasha tremble. It does not appear that the massacre of the beys was intended, or that it constituted a part of the Ottoman instructions; but what they might have suffered, if carried to the court of Constantinople, we dare scarcely venture to surmise. Less crimes than theirs have been capitally punished, even in well regulated governments; and though they had been promised forgiveness, yet in the perfidious divan, the turbulence of the beys would probably have been terminated by the use of the bow-string, or the gloom of a dungeon.

If under the protection of the British, such a daring outrage was resolutely committed, what were those Mamluke chiefs to apprehend from Turkish vengeance as soon as Egypt was wholly in their power. Under such impressions and alarms, they agreed to retire into Alsaid, and confine themselves to a limited part of the country. But we are not to suppose that the ambitious and resentful beys will pleasantly remain in that parched and unfruitful region. The Delta will still invite them to return, hatred toward the Turks will promote an invasion of their possessions, and the weakness of the enemy may permit them to descend with triumph. There are, however, a few circumstances which must gradually weaken the strength of the beys, and may finally overthrow them. They do not appear to be at peace among themselves, and Ibrahim's followers are in connection with the Turks. Some of the rest have surrendered to the Ottoman power, while

others remain in proud defiance; and when Elfi Bey returned from London, he was attacked by a party of rival chiefs on his way to Grand Cairo, and compelled to seek assistance from the wandering Arabs.

It is even suspected that some of the beys are unfriendly to Great Britain, and there cannot remain a doubt, that their ultimate desire is to conquer Egypt, and hold in their own power the reins of its government. But if success shall not soon crown their endeavours, and give them the means of renewed strength, their own destruction does not appear to be far distant. If they derive not a regular supply of slaves from the usual regions of the north; if Russia and Constantinople deny them the necessary aid, they must gradually be diminished in numbers; and their power must soon be at an end. The French deserters who joined their phalanx will not preserve them from destruction, for the inhospitable climate of Upper Egypt will soon

sweep Europeans away, and their Nubian recruits are not sufficient to preserve their strength.*

Preliminaries of peace were settled between France and Great Britain in the course of one month after General Menou had surrendered ; and, without knowing what was done at Alexandria, it was therein stipulated, that Egypt should be restored to the Ottoman government. But it was their weak and hopeless situation in that country which induced the French to resign so easily a favourite object of their desire. The magnanimous and honourable conduct of Britain was made apparent by consenting to withdraw her troops from Egypt, which was recovered by her arms and subject to her power. The definitive treaty of peace was not signed and finally concluded till the 27th of March, A. D. 1802, and Lord Cavan left Egypt in the month of October ensuing. He was succeeded in the com-

* Sir R. Wilson, p. 74, &c. ; and p. 95, &c.

mand of Alexandria by that meritorious officer Major-general, now Sir John Stuart; and Egypt was evacuated by the British upon the 12th of March 1803.

It is impossible to look back upon this country, committed again to the Turks, without feeling some anxieties, and foreboding some alarms. As an intermediate station to India, it cannot be viewed by Britain with indifference. The Turks are not able to protect it from the power of France, and some future political arrangements, between the courts of Paris and Constantinople, may give the French a footing in Egypt, to the detriment of Britain, or the loss of its Indian possessions. Standing as we now do, on terms of amity and alliance with the Sublime Porte, we cannot, in honour to ourselves, make a violent or surreptitious settlement in Egypt; but if different circumstances shall exist, it would perhaps be prudent and useful to seize upon Alexandria, and make it a British station. The old port is the on-

ly valuable harbour in the country; and surrounded as the city now is with water, judicious fortifications upon well chosen places would prevent it from being taken by surprise, and would necessarily form it a place of security and strength.

We dare scarcely hope that the Ottoman court will grant us that situation on terms of friendship; and we know human nature too well to promise even for Great Britain, that no further intrusions would be made into the country, or that she might not be tempted, by occurring circumstances, to seize the whole province within the circle of her power. In the meantime, it is a fortunate circumstance, that Malta was not surrendered, according to the late articles of peace with France. Suspicious appearances excited an idea, that under the confidential shade of a treaty, a plot was hatching to deceive Britain, and prepare the way for the French returning to seize upon Egypt. Malta was therefore wisely retained, the desolations of war were

unavoidably renewed ; and the strong holds which we possess in the Mediterranean enable us in the meantime to hold the enemy in check, and prevent any hostile projects in the east. It is impossible to foresee what changes may take place in Europe or the Levant ; but we trust, in the wisdom of British councils, that proper plans will be pursued for our own safety ; and we have full confidence in the prowess and military skill of the fleets and armies of our native country.

BOOK X.

CHAP. I.

*Conjectures about the formation of the Delta,
.... The height of the Nile during the in-
undation. ... The Natron lakes. ... The ci-
ties, towns, and villages, of Egypt. ... Cleo-
patra's needles. ... Pompey's pillar. ... The
trade and commerce of Egypt.*

HAVING pursued the history of Egypt so far, let us now take a view of the present situation in which it is placed. Its surface, the national improvements, or decay, the moral and religious state of the people, are all objects of importance, and deserve our notice.

It is undoubtedly true that the Delta was formerly a marshy district, but it cannot be distinctly ascertained what was the original condition, in which it was

left by the Creator's hand. If it has been at any time a bay of the sea, and gradually filled by the alluvial matter, which was carried down by the rains and currents, a question will naturally arise with respect to those circumstances which for ages past have prevented any important increase either in height or extent. The slow progress of accumulation which has long been observed, is used as an argument by antisciptural inquirers in favour of their opinion, that the world was in existence long before the era of the Mosaic account.

If ages have rolled on, say they, with little acquisition to the size of the Delta, how immense must have been that period of years, which by such slow degrees produced so large an extent of dry land. It is obvious, however, to be remarked, that immediately after the flood, or the original formation of the earth, the quantity of light and unattached soil must have been great upon its surface. These loose materials having been car-

ried down in abundance by the descending waters, and lodged in great quantities, where large rivers flowed into the sea, deltas and alluvial districts would in this manner be soon and variously formed. Besides the part of Egypt which is now denominated the Delta, cannot be considered as ever having been a bay of deep water. The earth is formed with hills and dales, and marshy plains appear to have been originally made by the Divine hand. Why then may it not be supposed, and rendered highly probable, that the Delta of Egypt was constituted in the beginning a swampy tract of land, and that the overflowings of the Nile, by depositing earth, improved its soil and enlarged its boundaries.^d

It is evident that the Delta has been increased since the time of the earlier historians; but no such conclusion is to be drawn from the number of cubits

^d Rennel's Memoir of a map of India, p. 178; and his Geog. of Herod. p. 492, &c.

which was then necessary in the risings of the Nile, for overflowing the country and rendering it fertile. Eight cubits appear to have been sufficient in the reign of Mœris, but in subsequent periods of time, the crop was in danger of being scanty, if the inundation were not fourteen deep; and so much greater increase was to be expected if the waters rose higher, but did not exceed eighteen cubits. If, however, the overflowing surpassed this boundary, the waters were too long in retiring, the fields continued drenched till too late a period, and the harvest was in danger of being small and deficient.

It is obvious both to reason and observation, that the overflowings of the Nile must annually deposit a certain quantity of mud, and therefore the height of the Delta may be gradually increasing; but the waters of the Nile moving slowly in their tract, through the plain of the Delta, will leave also a proportion of earth in the bottom of the river,

and thus the banks and the course of the streams will uniformly rise by the alluvious matter. If the Delta, in the time of Mœris, had been lower in proportion to the bed of the river than it is at present, the Nile, by an additional increase, would have overflowed it too much; and if eight cubits made the fields fertile, sixteen or upwards would have rendered them a lake or permanent marsh.

The solution of the difficulty appears to depend upon the different measures which have been used in Egypt. Such changes are common in the progress of society, and eight cubits, in the reign of Mœris, might be equal to sixteen of the present measure. The progressive rising of the Nile is publicly announced in the streets of Grand Cairo; but for obvious reasons, the real increase of the river is not always made known to the people. Nothing is so alarming as those indications which imply a deficiency of food, and nothing stirs up such commotions as scarcity and famine. If it be desir-

able, in the best regulated governments, to preserve the country from such alarms, how much more incumbent is it in the feeble province of Egypt to use precautions in a matter so delicate and important. Thus it is, that the Mikkees at Grand Cairo is not exposed to public view. Private measurements might indeed be made, but the jealousy of the Turkish government would render it dangerous; and the abject ignorance of the people at large prevents them from a conduct, which greater wisdom and improvements would suggest.

But the increase of earth upon the Delta is perhaps less considerable than it may generally be supposed, for the overflowing waters may sweep as much earth along with them into the canals and lateral streams, as they may deposit in other parts of their course; and the land will only continue to encroach upon the sea where the beach is gently sloping; but as soon as it approaches the deeper parts, the alluvial matter will

was formed. On this account it is sometimes distinguished, and properly, by the name Maadia. As to the lake Mareotis, which had almost become dry, we have found in what manner it was supplied with water, by the British cutting the banks of the canal of Alexandria, and permitting the waters of lake Abukir to flow into the bed of the ancient Mareotis.*

The waves of the Mediterranean sea have, in the course of ages, swept away so much of the soft soil, at the opening into the ancient Serbonis, which was on the further side of the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, that the lake is now completely joined with, and constitutes a part of the sea itself. In the Lybian desert, about thirty miles westward from the Nile, and not far from the Baher-bela-ma there is a valley, in which there

* Memoirs relative to Egypt, London, A. D. 1800, 8vo, p. 188, 189, &c.; and Sir R. Wilson, vol. ii, in a note, p. 6.

are six lakes of different descriptions. Contrary to the prevailing circumstances of that country, they are supplied with water from natural springs. By the powerful influence of evaporation in those sultry regions, the water of those lakes deposits annually, great quantities of natron. There appears indeed to be a tendency, in warmer climates, to produce and cherish saline substances ; and hence, in those countries, it is difficult and rare to meet with springs of fresh water.

The saline materials of the natron lakes appear, from examination, to consist of the muriat of soda, or common salt ; of the carbonat of soda, or fossil alkali, with fixed air, and both of them blended with a small portion of sulphat of soda, or Glauber's salts. When these are all held in a state of solution, the muriat of soda crystallizes first, and forms a layer of common salt ; and then the carbonat of the same alkali deposits its crystals ; and thus every year two

strata of different salts are regularly formed. As to the inconsiderable quantity of the soda-sulphat, it is probably produced by the sulphureous particles, which the water of the springs meet with in passing through the ground. The earth, in the vicinity of those lakes, abounds with calcareous matter, which, in a moist and warm situation, is known to decompose the muriat of soda; and thus the carbonat of that alkali may be produced.^b

The glistening saline particles, which abound in the soil of Egypt, may combine with the temperature of the climate, in producing that optical deception, which the French call *mirage*; and which presents an appearance of an expanse of water, where nothing but drought reigns, and arid sands prevail. To the thirsty traveller, this delusive appearance is attended with the most un-

^b Memoirs relative to Egypt, p. 253, 254, &c.; and p. 304, 305, &c.

easy feelings, and overwhelming disappointment. Rays of light, passing through mediums of different densities, are refracted in their course, and the more oblique beams being thrown back, at or near the surface of the heated earth, the lower part of the serene sky of Egypt is reflected as from a mirror; and the view of it being bounded by trees, houses, or other elevated objects, it appears to the eye like a sheet of water.^c

The common houses and villages of Egypt are formed of mud, and each of the dwellings consists but of one apartment, which is of a circular form, and seldom exceeds ten feet in diameter. The doors are low, and in certain situations, where danger is apprehended from the wandering Arabs, those necessary apertures are still more diminutive and carefully shut. Through these small openings that docile animal the camel is sometimes introduced. He is

^c Memoirs of Egypt, p. 74, 75, &c.

taught to lie down at full length, and is dragged in by force and skill. Perhaps in allusion to this astonishing practice, a thing of difficult accomplishment is compared, in scripture, to a camel passing through the eye of a needle.^a

No country abounds equally with Egypt in ruins, and proofs of departed greatness. The ancient site of Canopus, Tanis, and other places of early fame, may be sought in the Delta, and lower parts of Egypt; but to Thebais we are to direct our inquiries, for the grand and magnificent in early ruins. Toward the commencement of this work, we endeavoured to appreciate the city of Thebes, by the grandeur of its remains; and to form an idea of Memphis by the records of its greatness; but scarcely can the banks of the Nile, in Upper Egypt, be visited without treading, at every station, upon ruins sacred by antiquity,

^a Sir R. Wilson, vol. ii, p. 157; Matth. ch. xix, v. 24; and Sompini, p. 347, 348.

and consecrated by fame. At Philo and Assuan, at Elephantina and Carnak, at Tentyra, and innumerable other places of Upper Egypt, the superb column, the ruined arch, and the stately monuments raise the mind to other days, and bewilder it in the melancholy wanderings of time's ravages, and destruction's rage. The remains of the temple at Carnak, and the magnificent ruins of Luxor are not to be compared to the more chaste designs of Ésnah, Etfu, or Tentyra. In the multiplied memorials of art, which are discovered amid the ruins of Egypt, we see the progress of skill, we discern the changing fashions of time, and we remark the tendency of knowledge toward the perfection of its nature.

Girgeh, which is now the capital of Upper Egypt, is situated near the Nile, and being only about two miles in circumference, is neither so large nor populous as Siut. Suez, toward the head of the Arabian gulf, is a town of little

importance, and enjoys, at present, but a small proportion of trade. Damietta stands upon the eastern bank of that branch of the Nile, and though not a place of great business is more celebrated for trade, than for the beauty of the houses, or the agreeableness of the situation. It is now at the distance of more than four miles from the sea-shore, though in early times it may have been nearer the Damietta mouth of the Nile, because the Delta has evidently extended its boundaries upon the shore of the Mediterranean. Rosetta is more delightfully situated, being surrounded with considerable verdure, and adorned with abundance of date trees. Its houses are generally built with burnt bricks, but have few charms to an European eye. The principal part of the trade, which is connected with the Nile, passes through the ports of this town; and if commerce were well regulated, the inhabitants might be flourishing. The banks of the Nile, and the expanse of the Delta,

abound with villages and towns; but though their minarets, and dome-finished pigeon houses, have a splendid appearance at a distance; yet, upon a near approach, their poverty and wretchedness are apparent.

The present state of Alexandria is a subject of deep regret; and in its condition, we behold the pride of grandeur and magnificence sunk into abject misery. Once the city of Alexandria was extensive and superb, its walls inclosed a large space, and costly buildings adorned the town. It was worthy of its august founder, and the remembrance of its former glory stamps it with reverence, and renders its ruins venerable. But the seat of kings, the centre of science, and the emporium of trade, has gradually sunk into a contemptible town, devoid of riches, and scarcely containing seven thousand inhabitants. When Egypt fell into the power of the Saracens, Alexandria was treated with inferior consideration; and the city run in-

to decay. The walls which they built, encompassed a less extent than those of the ancient city; and the columns of former buildings, which appear in the ruins of the Saracen circumvallation, strongly indicate the desolation of superb structures, and the want of respect for former greatness; and yet the Saracen gate is a specimen of superb and elegant architecture.

The town of Alexandria having shrunk into a place of comparative insignificance, is now partly situated upon the peninsula between the old and new harbour. Excepting the houses of the European consuls, there are no buildings of beauty, or elegance; and in general the habitations are little superior to those which are found in a despicable village. The illiterate condition of the Turks appears in the stile of their buildings; and it afflicts a man of consideration or taste, to see a polished fragment, of some venerable structure, placed without order or symmetry, even in their

best fabrics ; and a part of a Corinthian column standing, perhaps, inverted in the rude workmanship of a mud wall.

The present Pharos is at the end of a causey, projecting into the sea, and is used as a fortification or place of strength ; but it can bear no comparison with the ancient structure of the same name, which excited the wonder and admiration of the world. Fragments, which are still to be seen, direct us for the site of that superb building, to a rock in the new port, which is called the Diamond, and exceedingly dangerous for ships. The forts, which the French repaired or constructed, contribute toward the strength and safety of Alexandria ; but Egypt must fall into the possession of more active and enlightened people than the Turks, before it regains its splendour, or rises into consequence.*

The ruins of this ancient city still afford the means of contemplation and

* Pococke, vol. i, p. 2 ; and Walsh, p. 223.

profound enquiry. The celebrated cisterns of early times, have many of them fallen into decay, yet still they are capable of receiving and retaining water for a numerous population. There are, however, certain circumstances respecting the canal of Alexandria, which may produce inconveniencies to the inhabitants of the city. Having been cut by the British, that the waters of lake Abukir might flow into that of Mareotis, the communication with Alexandria was thus unavoidably destroyed; and the waters of the Nile, which usually flowed into the cisterns, must be lost among the briny swellings of the lakes.

We know not whether means have been pursued to repair the breach in the canal of Alexandria; but as the inundation of Mareotis appears to be necessary for the defence of the town, measures should be adopted to preserve its communication with lake Abukir and the waters of the sea. This valuable object could readily be obtained,

by applying pipes to convey the water of the canal, under the opening between the lakes, till it could be thrown again into the ancient channel; or arched ways could be formed under the canal, so as to suffer the waters of the sea to pass easily into the lake of Mareotis. But the inhabitants of Alexandria are not altogether dependant upon the supplies of the canal; for Julius Cæsar, we know, found water in that city by digging wells; and the British army was also fortunate in searching for that necessary element, in the peninsula of Abukir.

Close by the sea-side, and to the eastward of the Pharos, are two obelisks, known by the name of Cleopatra's needles, the shaft of which is sixty-five feet long, and the base seven feet square. One of them stands upright, supported by four brass blocks, upon a pedestal six feet high. The other has been overturned by the disasters of time, and has been for ages partly covered with

sand and rubbish. Lord Cavan proposed to have this one conveyed to London, as a trophy of the British victory, and a monument of his country's greatness. Various memorials of antiquity were carried from Egypt to France and Britain, which, when fully examined, will illustrate history, and gratify the curious; but several untoward circumstances prevented this vast obelisk from being transported into Europe. Lord Cavan, having raised it from the earth, and supported it by blocks of granite, was under the necessity of leaving it, perhaps, to the wreck of time, and the accidents of a rude country. Having cleared away the sand he discovered its pedestal; and a hole being cut in the solid granite he deposited, in the hollow, a specimen of the various coins of George III, and the grand signior. This he covered, and secured with a marble slab, and inscribed upon the tablet a memorial of what the British had done, in subduing the French and recovering Egypt.

These two obelisks are of ancient date, and none can know the bounds of their antiquity. It has been conjectured, that they adorned the principal gate of a royal palace, which belonged to the Ptolemies; but on account of Cleopatra's fame and public spirit, they have been called by her name; and with that designation handed down throughout many generations. Yet their origin does not seem to be confined by the era at which the city of Alexandria was founded; for they are inscribed with hieroglyphics, which lead us back to ages more remote. As the ruins of Thebes adorned the growing city of Memphis, so from the wreck of their splendour, noble pieces of art might be destined, and conveyed, to add lustre to the royal city of Alexandria.^b

Nearly on a line with the Pharos, without the walls of ancient Alexandria,

^b Sir R. Wilson, vol. ii, p. 56, 57, &c.

and not far from the lake Mareotis, stands, in superb grandeur, the pillar of Pompey. It rises to the height of eighty-eight feet and a half. The pedestal is ten feet, the base five and six inches. The shaft is sixty-three feet one inch, and the capital somewhat more than nine feet ten inches. The French Savans ascertained those heights by actual measurement ; and placed upon its top the cap of liberty.* It belongs to the Corinthian order, though the proportions and ornaments are rather of a mixed species. Perhaps it may never be completely known by whom this column was erected, or whether it also did not originally belong to some of the splendid cities in Upper Egypt. The irregularities of its order may probably imply, that its parts were formed at different periods, and a Corinthian base and capital might thus be applied to an Eryp-

* British sailors, and other visitors, formerly ascended it too, by means of a kite.

tian shaft. This member of the column being red granite, appears to be from the quarries of Said, and is different in colour as well as in kind, from the other parts of this majestic pillar.

The erection of that famous monument has been ascribed to some of the Ptolemies ; and it has also been supposed to have been reared to the memory and honour of some of the emperors who reigned at Rome. We are told that Ptolemy Philadelphus raised it in affectionate regard to his beloved queen Arsinoe ; and that the circular depression on the top was intended to receive a votive statue to the honour of his father. Ptolemy Eurgetes has also been mentioned as its founder, and some have maintained, that it was erected for the emperor Adrian or Severus.

Travellers had often mentioned a Greek inscription, which was considerably defaced, and which the French literati themselves deeply lamented, as incapable of being read. It was natur-

The professor is therefore of opinion, that the lower part or pedestal, consists of a portion of some ruined building, and that this perished fabric was the serapium of Alexandria.^a

The city of Grand Cairo has long been the boast of the Turks, and the admiration of the natives. We have traced its growth from an ancient fort of some eastern people, and we have found its situation venerated by the Saracens, as the place where Amru pitched his tents, on his way to subdue Memphis. But this ancient town was also denominated Misre, which may imply a place of strength, or have a reference to Mizraim, from whom Egypt was originally peopled. Old Cairo has now degenerated into a suburb, and derives all its importance from possessing the port, which is occupied by the trade

^a Sir R. Wilson, vol. ii, p. 58, &c.; Capt. Walsh p. 224, &c.; Memoirs of Egypt, p. 68, &c.; Whyte's Egyptica, part i, p. 84, &c.; Sonnini, p. 84.

of Alsaid. When Egypt was an independent country, under the government of the caliphs and Mamluke dynasties, the town of Grand Cairo became great in extent, and was adorned with colleges, mosques, and a variety of superb buildings.

During that flourishing period of its history, the castle of mount Mocattem was erected, and rose to importance. It was connected with a considerable extent of wall, which included many palaces and public buildings. While the Baharite and Borgite dynasties prevailed, it was in those palaces of the castle where the chiefs of the government resided ; and where they were surrounded by their slaves, who constituted their political strength, and in the tumults of the state sometimes raised their masters to the throne.*

To enable the people of the castle to endure with more convenience the

* Deguignes, tom. 4, p. 249.

sieges and blockades, to which they were frequently exposed, a well was dug in the rock, nearly to the depth of two hundred and eighty feet. The form of the aperture is an oblong square, and the first part of the well exceeds one hundred and fifty feet in depth. There is then a platform, and at a little distance from the former shaft, another is sunk to the depth of more than one hundred and twenty feet. Round the upper shaft there is a flight of steps formed out of the rock, which is so broad and sloping, that oxen are introduced to the platform below, and by a Persian wheel raise the water to that height. Being there received into a reservoir, it is conveyed in a similar manner to the top.

This work is denominated the well of Joseph, but not, as has often been supposed, from the celebrated patriarch of that name, because no part of Cairo existed for more than two thousand years after the children of Israel depart-

ed from Egypt. It was probably made when the castle was built by Caracush, who erected it by the command of Saladin, whose original name was Abu Modhaffer Yoseph, or Joseph, and from him the citadel has received its designation.

The water is brackish, and not used for the food or drink of the inhabitants, when that of the Nile can easily be procured, by the ancient aqueduct, into which it is raised from the streams of the river.

The stairs connected with the upper shaft are separated from the well by a thin partition of the rock, because it would otherwise have been dangerous to convey the oxen to the platform below; but the steps connected with the inferior shaft, being much narrower, and having no partition, render it dangerous for people to descend and examine that part of the work. While this vast undertaking demonstrates the enterprising spirit of those, by whom it was pro-

jected, it shews at the same time what advantages we enjoy by the progress of improvements, and how much easier the same effects could be produced by the application and benefit of modern science.

Many of the stately buildings, which abounded within the walls of the castle, and in the city of Grand Cairo, have been destroyed by the rude hand of violence, or suffered to fall into the ruins of time. The present town of Cairo is little more than six miles in circumference, and has few ornaments to render it attracting; but, like most ancient cities, it is defended by walls and gates. The streets are all narrow, and some of them scarcely six feet broad. They are therefore of necessity crowded with passengers, and many inconveniences ensue. They are not paved, and the dust is frequently intolerable. There are few windows toward the streets, and those are either occupied by lattice-work, or painted

glass. The roofs are flat, and the principal light of the best apartments is thrown in at domes. Some of the palaces are surrounded by gloomy walls; but the interior of those mansions is splendid, and well accommodated to the indolence and luxury of the east. Beds covered with rich stuffs, elegant cushions, and tufted carpets, are marks of grandeur, and invite to repose. In some of their halls and saloons are jets and marble fountains of water; in others there are vapour baths, and various inducements to indolence and pleasure. The tombs of the caliphs are splendid buildings, and shew the architectural taste of former times.

The place Bequier is a spacious square, in which the beys had their principal abode. In the palace of Hassan the meetings of the French institute were held; in this square too Bonaparte resided; and there Kleber breathed his last.

The canal, which passes through the

town, serves as a street when the waters retire ; and then the square of the beys assumes the appearance of a field. Here the French planted several trees, which added to the beauty of the place.

The village of Bulak has sprung up from the lower port of Grand Cairo, which the commerce of Alexandria continues to cherish. There is accommodation for a considerable extent of merchandize, and the neighbourhood is adorned with gardens and trees. Nearly opposite to Bulak is the island of Roda, in the middle of the Nile. It is almost a mile in length, and is by far the most delightful situation in Egypt. It is shaded by the sycamore or fig-tree of Pharaoh ; and the most charming gardens diffuse their fragrance abroad. In that sweet island Murad Bey had a summer retreat, and there the beauties of the vegetable creation abound. Giza is almost opposite on the Lybian side of the river, and is a place of no great importance. It is mostly surrounded by a

wall, which can yield it little protection, and the palace of Murad Bey is the greatest ornament of the village. It was here that the French had their manufactory of arms, and other implements of war, but the place was compelled to surrender, by the prevailing force of the British army.

At the south end of Roda is the famous Mikkeas for measuring the height of the Nile. In a Saracen building of considerable elegance there is a marble bason, and the bottom of it is on a level with that of the river. Erected in this cavity there is an octagonal pillar, upon which there is a scale for ascertaining the increase of the river in the season of its overflowings.

In all the principal towns of Egypt, there is a quarter or division allotted for the Europeans, and the Greek patriarch resides in Old Cairo. Notwithstanding the ancient fame of the citadel, it is not a place of such strength, as to resist a siege conducted in the modern

manner. The heights of Mocattam command the castle, and a few battering cannon, placed in that situation, would soon destroy its walls. But that eminence, on account of the deep ravins, is scarcely accessible to heavy artillery; and the place would not be long tenable, from the nature of the climate, and the want of water. During the commotions which recurred at Grand Cairo against the French, much damage was done to the town, and several houses of the beys were destroyed; but the towers and forts which the enemy erected have placed the city in a better state of defence than it was when they subdued it. Among the numerous distractions to which Egypt has been subjected, its cities and towns have often suffered violence, and the memorials of desolation are even seen in the streets themselves. In the abject and indolent condition of the Turks, the rubbish of decayed buildings is seldom removed, and new

houses are erected upon the ruins of former habitations.^a

Notwithstanding the unfavourable circumstances, in which Egypt has often and long been placed, still its natural advantages for commerce have retained for it a considerable share of trade. The people of Marseilles maintained a traffic with Alexandria in ancient times, and thither the Venetians sailed with ships of merchandize. Even after the commerce of India was directed to Europe round the Cape of Good Hope, traffic from different sources continued to flow in the channels of Egypt.^a

The small town of Suez has several ships, which trade with Jidda and other places on the Arabian coast, where they receive coffee, perfumes, and other articles of commerce, from the province

^a Rich. Pococke, p. 25, &c.; Browne's travels, p. 74, &c.; and Sir R. Wilson, vol. i, p. 238, &c.

^b *Memoires des inscriptions*, &c. tom. 37, p. 467, &c.; and Baldwin's recollections, p. 178, &c.

of Yeman; cotton goods from India, spices from Ceylon, and shawls from Cashmir. Damietta has a commercial intercourse for tobacco and soap with Latakia and Syria, and for clothing, arms, furs, and silk, with Constantinople. But Alexandria is the proper port for the merchants of Europe. It has two harbours, which are known by the name of the old and the new; but the narrow policy of the Turks confines the christian merchants to the latter, which is both inconvenient and dangerous. The old port is sufficient for a large resort of ships, and it ought to be thrown open to the general commerce of nations. Timber is brought thither from Candia, copper from Constantinople, and various kinds of manufactures from other parts of Europe.

But Grand Cairo is the emporium of trade for Egypt. Though at a distance from the sea, it has the advantages of the river Nile, but it derives its great excellence from being the capital of the

country. There the constituted authorities reside; thither the people of fashion resort; and into this city the riches of the nation are poured. At Cairo a caravan arrives annually from Sennar, and other parts of the south; and the people expose to barter or sale a variety of productions, which belong to the countries from which they come. Among the numerous articles of merchandize which they bring to market, we may specify black slaves, gold dust, ivory, sena, and ostrich feathers. Another mercantile caravan arrives from Dar-Fûr, and the great one of pilgrims which belongs to Murzûk, the capital of Fezzan, passes through Grand Cairo. While it visits Mecca with religious homage, a great part of the company is also engaged in trade. The commerce of Africa and Egypt is encouraged too by the services of the camel, or rather that species of it called the dromedary, which is chiefly distinguished by having only one bunch upon its back. Patient

of labour, and capable of enduring hunger and thirst, it is so well fitted for sultry and barren climates, that it has frequently been denominated the ship of the desert.

The Delta and the banks of the Nile, even in Upper Egypt, have long been productive of corn, and yielded a valuable supply to other nations; but they are also capable of producing rice, and there too the sugar-cane may be reared to advantage. But the state of agriculture is low, and little is done by the hand of art for producing a crop. The best improved husbandry of Europe, accommodated to the circumstances of Egypt, would increase the returns of harvest to an astonishing degree. In that country the corn is still trodden out by oxen walking upon it, in a place prepared for the purpose; and they drag over it a kind of sledge, with numerous rollers, or small wheels.^d Salt-

^d Sonnini p. 146.

petre abounds in this country, and many concurring circumstances point out a valuable trade in the manufacture of gun-powder. The abundance of soda supplied by the natron lakes, taken in connection with the prevalence of siliceous sand, lays the foundation of extensive works for the making of glass; and the natron viewed in reference to the tallow, which may easily be procured, shews the propriety of establishing, upon a large scale, the manufacturing of soap. But indeed it would be difficult to attempt the enumeration of all the commercial advantages, which Egypt might enjoy of itself, or derive from its intercourse with other nations.^a

It appears that a canal through the isthmus of Suez, to join the Red and Mediterranean seas, would tend greatly to facilitate the commerce of Egypt. The ancient idea, that the country

^a Pococke's observ. vol. i, p. 20 & 39; Volney, tom. i. ch. 13, &c.; and Browne's Travels, ch. 6 & 18.

might thus be inundated by the waters of the sea, will not excite a fear upon the principle of sound reasoning. By certain concurring causes, the waters of a gulf may be somewhat accumulated; but no presumption seems to arise, that the level of the Red sea is much different from the Mediterranean. In the latter, indeed, there is little or no tide, whereas in the former, it rises to the height of several feet; but this natural difference could easily be managed, so as to be productive of advantage to the canal. The lock next the shore of Suez could be so constructed, as to prevent the water from rushing in, till it arose to a certain height; and the superfluous quantity which escaped, might be preserved in a reservoir, for supplying the waste and locks of the canal.

The waters of the river, and the billows of the Mediterranean sea, meeting one another at the mouth of the Nile, form banks of sand, which injure the navigation of the river, and in the lan-

guage of the country are called Boghazes. To prevent this inconvenience in the great trade of Cairo, a canal should be drawn from the bay of Abukir, to join lake Edko, and then communicate with the Rosetta branch of the Nile. To possess Egypt as a colony must be valuable to any commercial nation ; and an active people, in the enjoyment of that country, must have the means of being prejudicial to the British settlements in India. Rich as our government is with numerous colonies, both in the east and in the west, we know not how far it might be prudent, even if it were honourable, to seize upon Egypt as a foreign possession ; but one thing is undeniably certain, that the French, enjoying the sovereignty of the country, would be highly dangerous to the British. A strong fleet upon the Malabar coast, and toward the straits of Babelmandel, would tend to keep the people of Egypt in check ; but this would be an expensive as well as a dan-

gerous precaution. Moreover the way through Syria, and the Persian gulf, by which even the Russians have threatened to invade India, could neither be easily watched nor securely guarded. In truth Britain must be assiduous to prevent the French, or any other rival nation from settling in Egypt; and to this interesting point, the vigilance of the nation, and the prudence of its councils, ought to be turned with seriousness and applied with care.

^d Brougham's Colonial policy, Edin. A. D. 1803, 8vo, p. 333, 334, &c.

CHAP. II.

The present inhabitants of Egypt. . . . Their dress General manners Diseases Language. . . . State of religion and knowledge. . . . The conclusion.

THE most ancient inhabitants of Egypt have long ago been undistinguishable, by their intermixture with foreign invaders, and the successive influx of different nations. But we can still discover, as a distinct race, the offspring of those people, who were in full possession of Egypt, when that unfortunate country was deprived of its legitimate sovereigns, and became a province of the Roman empire. They are denominated Copts, and though still a subordinate people ; yet they exceed in consequence the descendants of those Saracens who once reigned over, and oppressed them. They possess more learn-

ing than falls to the share of Egyptians in general; and they are employed, both as agents and secretaries, by the merchants and government.

The Arabs, who descended with Amru into Egypt, were invested with the richest parts of the country; and their offspring, though sunk as to importance, do yet possess the Delta in the quality of husbandmen. From the people of Arabia, who went into Mauritania and other parts of western Africa, there has sprung up a race, whom we have frequently observed among the armies of Egypt, and many of them have settled in the villages of Alsaid.

The Beduin, or wandering Arabs are still in the pastoral state, and live in tents like some of the patriarchs; but whatever may be the resemblance to that ancient people, in general manners and pursuits, they differ widely in their moral principles. The early patriarchs were guided by the simple customs of the age and country in which they

lived ; but they were directed by a high sense of honour, and influenced by the precepts of a pure religion. When there was strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle, and those of Lot, the venerable patriarchs settled the dispute by an amicable agreement, and a feud between Abram and the prince of Gerar, was prudently exchanged for a covenant of peace.*

But the wandering Arabs of the desert are thieves and robbers. The different tribes of that people are governed by a sheik, and live partly by plunder, and partly by pasturage. According to the seasons, they go where their cattle can best be fed, and many of them descend to the rich plains of the Delta. There they pasture their cattle by permission and compact ; but their tribute is not sure, and frequently they violate the terms of their agreement. They ride upon swift horses of Arabia, and dart-

* Genesis, ch. xiii. v. 7, &c.; ch. xxi, v. 25, &c.

ing into the wilderness, they escape from their pursuers, and defy the authority of law.^a

Of the Mamlukes, so much has already been said, that nothing more is necessary here, than merely to mention them among the different people who dwell in Egypt. Jews and Greeks, European consuls and merchants, with a few black slaves, are also to be entered in the catalogue of inhabitants. There too many Turks have their abode, but they are not so numerous as might be expected in so valuable a province of the Ottoman empire.

Still the garments of the east continue to be loose, and altogether different from European clothing. Both men and women wear drawers, which also cover their legs instead of stockings. They have likewise a kind of boot, rather made in the shape of hose, and while the poorer sort travel barefooted, those in better

^a Norden, vol. i, p. 68; and Niebuhr, tom. i, ch. 3.

circumstances are provided with slippers. Shoes must be considered as more convenient for walking, but in entering sacred places and the apartments of the great, eastern manners require that the feet should not be shod, and therefore slippers or sandals, being easily put off, are generally used. All classes and distinctions wear a shirt with wide sleeves; and the poorer part of the people have theirs of a blue colour, but their dress consists of little more than this and a pair of drawers. The rich among the men have a profusion of tunics, caftans, and pelisses, while the ladies have the most magnificent robes, and vie with each other in the number, as well as the elegance, of their dresses.^b

The Mohammedans shave their heads, but, some religious orders excepted, they reserve a small tuft of hair upon the crown. They wear turbans of different shapes as well as colours, and are adorn-

^b Exodus, ch. iii, v. 4, 5; and Niebuhr, ch. 4.

ed with mustaches and a long beard. Throughout the whole of the east, the ladies are still peculiarly attentive to the ornaments of the head ; but the sentiments and prevailing jealousies of those countries prescribe the veil, which conceals the face, and hides the studied decorations of the hair. Even female children, who are otherwise naked, till they are six or eight years of age, uniformly wear the veil, to give early impressions of what is deemed becoming in that peculiar state of society.

The ladies are adorned with a profusion of jewels upon their heads, in their ears, and upon their hands. As in the east, even some of the men are decked with ear-rings, so there are also nose jewels, and some of the ladies have tinkling ornaments about their ankles. As superfluous and unbecoming dress indicates a corrupt state of society, so the prophet Isaiah, in announcing the evils which were engendering for the house of Judah, reprobates the pride, the lux-

ury, and unseemly dresses of the people. He alluded to some of those very trappings which are still to be found in the east, and which in his time had been carried to a culpable excess.^c

To increase the appearance and effect of the large black eye, which is common and admired in the east, the Egyptian women paint their eye-lids black, with a metallic calx or oxyd, and with the same materials tinge the corners and lashes of their eye. With a paste made from the henna, or Egyptian privet, they stain their nails, the palms of their hands, and even the soles of their feet, that they may appear of a delicate red, or assume a blushing colour. Such preposterous staining is also practised among the ruder nations of the east ; tatooing, or figures made upon the body by blackened punctures, is deemed an ornament among the Beduin Arabs, and at one

^c Isaiah, ch. iii, v. 16, &c.

period, even the ladies of Rome painted the lashes and corners of their eyes.^d

But why this scrupulous attention to dress, and why those gaudy or superfluous ornaments, for the Mohammedan women are slaves, under a milder guise; and in proportion to their rank, so are their restraints. Shut up from the intercourse of society, they are chiefly seen and admired by their attendants and more immediate female friends; for their proud lords are divided in their affections, and the different women of their household strive in vain to retain their love. The more delicate feelings of attachment and admiration are converted in the breast of an Egyptian, or Mohammedan lord, into the frowning furies of a dark and chilling jealousy. Such is the general situation of the harems and the seraglios; but there are men of milder affections, who can discriminate

^d Sonnini, p. 170, &c.; Harmer's observ. vol. ii, p. 384, &c.; and Park's Travels, p. 270, in the notes.

worth, and who are held engaged by the virtues and graces of a superior female. There are women too, who dearly love their lords, and who take a chief interest in their prosperity and peace. The unnatural restraints, to which they are subjected, are not so unpleasant and galling to them, as they would be to women of a different education and of more liberal habits; but still their confinement is ungenerous to them, and unfriendly to society.

It is not more favourable to morals, nor a greater security for female chastity, than the more natural and free manners of European nations. The virtue of self-denial has no means by which it can be formed, in the sentiments or education of a secluded female. Undue restraints do but excite impatience, and immured within the walls of the women's apartments, good faith and conjugal vows are often broken. Among the inferior classes of the people, the liberty, which is given on festival days to visit the

graves and weep over the tombs of their departed friends, is often perverted to licentiousness and deceit. The well regulated intercourse of society, which better formed habits permit, is productive of such advantages to every order and distinction of the state, as no other arrangements could cherish or bestow.

There is a mutual improvement which springs from mixed society, and graces are thus brought into action, which must otherwise lie dormant and be unknown. Female seclusion affects the whole departments of life, and gives a peculiar cast to all the tendencies of society. The jealousies of government, and the influence of climate cannot account for the characteristic silence of the Mohammedan people. Their ignorance, and the few objects which ingross their attention, impose upon them a vacant seriousness; but the want of mixed society in the common situations of life, deprives them of much cheerfulness, and leads to sullen reserve.

When the men and the women join in the usual avocations of the world, and are not separated by destructive jealousy, they multiply the topics of conversation, and give a general air of liveliness to society. The amusements and pursuits of the followers of Mohammed, are all descriptive of their silence and inactivity. Whether they be engaged in martial exercises, or the common amusements of private society, the general tenor of their conduct is haughty and reserved. They spend whole days smoaking their pipes and drinking coffee; while the silence is only broken by an occasional remark and a reluctant reply. Ease and languor participate largely of their desires, and in their pursuits of pleasure they devise a variety of means, in the form and management of their pipes, for inhaling cool and mild the narcotic and intoxicating fumes of tobacco.

In this state of restrained society, and where indolence so completely marks

the character, marriages cannot be founded on acquaintance; and it is unusual to have the merits or graces of the women introduced into the conversations of common life. Parties therefore are placed in the sacred bond of wedlock, by the influence of incidental circumstances, or the intervention of mutual friends. The marriage ceremonies are conducted with great show, and a procession illuminated with torches is pompously made in the night-time, accompanied with the noise of music and the voice of song. Thus may be illustrated the improvident conduct of the foolish virgins who had no oil in their lamps, when *at midnight there was a cry, behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.*^b

Some of the Egyptian music has a resemblance to certain Spanish airs^c,

^b Matth. ch. 25, v. 1, 2, &c.

^c The sequidillas, which end in a semitone beneath the key note, as many of the Scotch airs do in a third above it.

which put us in remembrance, that the Saracens of Cordova and those of Egypt were from the same stock, and possessed of similar manners. The music of Egypt and that of the east, in general, is solemn in its tones, and, not having passed through the changes of improved society, it retains the ancient simplicity, and does not consist of different parts, to be played in concert, but it is accompanied by tambourines, which mark the time, and enliven the scene. The gravity of the Mohammedans does not permit the males to dance, but the ladies are proficient in the graceful movements of that engaging art. Notwithstanding the stern reserve of the Ottoman character, the people delight in public shows; and even the sober and virtuous take pleasure in observing the gestures of the public female dancers, though they are indelicate in their manners, and incorrect in their conduct.^c

^c Niebuhr, tom. i, ch. 8, 9; and Denon, vol. i, p. 131, &c.

The habits of the east are more sober than ours, and Mohammedans are not permitted to use wine or strong drink. Date brandy, however, is made in Egypt, and the religious commands of the prophet of Mecca are sometimes disobeyed ; but in general the fumes of intoxicating liquor are not so profusely in use, as to disorder the frame, or injure the intellectual powers. Yet opium is profusely consumed ; and the injudicious or dissipated are frequently enfeebled by its narcotic and destructive effects. The waters of the Nile are much esteemed in Egypt, and large draughts of them are drunk with pleasure. But the slimy and putrid banks of that river are not delightful to an European eye, which has beheld more romantic scenes, and more enchanting verdure. The streams are destitute of charms to that class of travellers, who have seen more limpid rivers, and drunk from pure and inviting fountains. The waters of the Nile are turbid for several months of the year,

by the effects of the inundation ; and, when at their lowest ebb, they frequently abound with insects, and are unpleasant to the eye. But portions of them are prepared to drink, by being mixed and purified with pounded almonds; and by evaporation in porous jars, they are cooled and made refreshing in the warm and sultry seasons.^d

Notwithstanding the washings and bathings which are common in the east, cotton and woollen garments, in a warm country, are productive of unpleasant effects, and the houses, as well as the persons of the poor, are disgusting with noisome vermin. Part of these inconveniencies arises from the pigeon-houses, which are connected with the common dwellings of the people in Egypt.^e

We cannot advance a step in examining the ancient condition, or the present

^d Sonnini, p. 252, 253, &c.

^e Sir R. Wilson, vol. i, p. 99 ; Sonnini, p. 621, &c. ; and Denon, vol. i, p. 244.

circumstances of the east, without meeting with illustrations of the truth and importance of our Sacred Books. Among the tendencies to turn them into contempt, the wonders, which were done in Egypt by the hand of Moses, have not only been denied, but exposed to pointed ridicule, as implying judgments, which, in their nature, were unworthy of the power and dignity of Jehovah. But it is to be remarked, that the object of every chastisement is to correct error and produce happy effects ; and we see in the conduct of the Almighty, that when he inflicts judgments, he is often pleased, in the exercise of his supreme wisdom, to employ the common agents of his providence for accomplishing the peculiar purposes of his will. The whole parts of creation, from the seraph who glows in his presence with pure and holy obedience, to the particles of dust which are tossed in the desert, are all the messengers of his power and the ministers of his government.

The inroads and settlements of the children of Israel were the means of punishing the incorrigible corruption of the people, who dwelt in the land of Canaan. When David sinned by numbering the people, the famine, the pestilence, and the destroying sword of the enemy were submitted to his choice, and each of them was ready to chastise the offender. When Jonah fled from the duty of warning the men of Nineveh, the storm and the seas provided his punishment. The unrelenting severity of Pharaoh toward the descendants of Jacob was a measure evidently in connection with a general corruption of manners; and therefore the hand of God was visible in afflicting the nation.^b

The people of Egypt were devoted to sorcery and magic, but God displayed to them in the plagues of their country, the mighty power of Heaven itself. They

^b Exodus, Joshua, and Jonah, *passim*, with 2 Samuel, ch. xxiv, v. 13, &c.

suffered occasionally by the putrid tendency of the Nile, but the waters of the land became red as blood. Their marshes abound with frogs, the sand and nature of the country encourage the production of flies, and their dwellings are disgusting with vermin; but all these were increased to an uncommon and supernatural degree, that the people might consider their transgressions, and contemplate the power of him who reigns. Still refusing, however, to be admonished or corrected, there were yet more dreadful chastisements appointed, till the Lord delivered Israel from bondage; and by the hand of his power opened for them a way, as we have observed, through the floods and the depths of the sea.^c

Egypt is noted for a great variety of diseases, and the leprosy, in several forms, affects the people of that country, but does not appear to be of that virulent

^c Exodus, ch. vii, viii, &c.; and vol. ii, of this hist. p. 16.

and highly infectious nature which was known of old, and which is spoken of among the ritual observances of the Jews. Diseases of the eyes are common in every country, and prevail more especially in warm and arid regions, where the reflection of the sun is violent, but nowhere do they assume such alarming forms as they do in Egypt. It is calculated, that nearly one fifth of its inhabitants are either blind, or have lost an eye; and both the British and French soldiers suffered much during their stay in that country. It has appeared in our researches, that the earth abounds with saline particles; and the nitrous gas, which rises by the action of heat, may seize upon the eyes, which are already tender by the violent reflection of light, and thus be productive of the great pain which is felt, and of the woful blindness which often ensues.^b

^b Sonnini, p. 259, &c.

But of all the scourges which afflict mankind, the plague, commonly so called, is the most alarming and fatal. It appears to be a species of violent fever, accompanied with tumors and buboes. It has generally been considered as exceedingly infectious by the touch; but, though Dr. White inoculated himself thrice, yet he was not affected till the third time, when he was dangerously seized, and died of the disease. From the judicious and accurate observations, which were made during the late French and British campaigns in Egypt, by gentlemen eminently skilled in medical pursuits, we are taught to consider the infectious matter as combined with the atmosphere, and swimming in the air. Like other fevers, the plague is supposed to proceed from miasmata, or putrid effluvia, which arise from marshes, corrupting bodies, or stagnant water; and is therefore often engendered in Egypt itself, and not always communicated by infection from Constantinople.

The atmosphere, which is impregnated with infectious matter, extends to but a small distance from its centre; and hence among the crowded villages of Egypt, one of them is sometimes desolated by the plague, while those in the neighbourhood are free from infection. Friction with the oil of olives, so as to produce profuse perspiration, was recommended by Mr. George Baldwin, as a cure for the plague; and in the practice of physicians, it has been found to be a valuable remedy. No small advantage has also been derived from the use of mercury, when so early applied, as to have time to operate before the disease has proved mortal by its natural progress. It is not improbable, that, under certain circumstances, cold bathing would be as effectual in cases of plague, as it is in those fevers where the heat is considerable. Upon the same principle cold and free air appear to be of importance for removing the symptoms; for persons, who escaped from the hospitals

where the plague was raging, and took shelter in the fields with little clothing, have been known to return in the course of a short time completely cured.^b It therefore appears that European cleanliness, and the use of those means, which are effectual in counteracting or alleviating infectious disorders, would render the plague no more alarming than any other contagious disease.

The early language of Egypt was gradually lost, by the changes of the country and the revolutions of ages;^c and now the Arabic is the prevailing medium of conversation, and written correspondence. But for obvious reasons it is not a pure dialect, and falls vastly short of the noble stile, and harmonious expressions, which appear in the Coran,

^b Baldwin's Recollections, p. 251, &c.; *Memoirs relative to Egypt*; Remarks by Desgenettès, p. 358, &c.; and Sir R. Wilson, vol. ii, p. 110, &c.

^c See vol. ii, c. 5. Hist. p. 50.

and are still predominant in the province of Yeman.

There are but few Roman catholics in Egypt, and the monasteries which they retain are neither numerous, nor well supported. The Monophysite doctrines are still maintained by the christian Copts, and they continue to hold a connection with their religious brethren in the kingdom of Abyssinia. Among other places in Egypt, which are appropriated to religious retirement, are the convents at the natron lakes, where the recluse were numerous, while the christians were in possession of Egypt; and that region, from the saline qualities of the water in those lakes, was then denominated *nitria*.^{*} But with a few exceptions of little moment, the religion of Egypt is that of Mahommed; and the professed rules of their conduct are prescribed in the Coran.

When the prophet of Mecca founded

^{*} Sonnini, p. 340, &c. and 496, &c.; Denon, vol. i, p. 256, &c.; and *Memoirs*, p. 257, &c.

that religion, which bears his name, he presented it to an ignorant people ; and impressing them with superstitious reverence, for the precepts and promises of the Coran, they sought no knowledge but what it contained, and received nothing as truth which was not therein prescribed. But commotions having sprung up about the succession to the throne of Mohammed, the hostile parties found it expedient to seek the direction of sound wisdom, as well as the power of the sword, and the victories of the field. Though the learning of Greece and Rome had been much obscured, and though the schools of Alexandria had been destroyed, yet there was still a residue of valuable knowledge, which found access to the palace of the caliphs.

The house of Ommiah gave encouragement to men of learning, and under the character of physicians, which is still peculiarly respected in the east, they appeared in the councils, and were numerous

about the court of the Arabian emperors. It was A. D. 762, that the caliph Al Mansur laid the foundation of Bagdat; and resolutions were then discovered of dignifying the new capital, with schools and seminaries of learning. Those wise institutions were established, and continued to flourish while the splendour of Bagdat remained. Among the successors of Mohammed, who were friendly to learning, the caliph Al Mamun was conspicuous in patronage to men of science, and he was celebrated for knowledge in physics and astronomy.^d

The Fatimites in Egypt adorned their reign by encouraging science; and Grand Cairo was honoured with numerous colleges, and well endowed schools. The Ommiades carried with them to Andalusia a knowledge of the newly acquired literature of Arabia; and from Spain feeble rays of light and

^d Abulpharaj. Hist. Dyn. passim, & Bruker, vol. iii, p. 22, &c.

philosophy darted into other parts of Europe. The learning of the west had been overwhelmed by the intrusion of barbarous nations, as well as by the influence of false and degrading opinions; and when the sun had set in those regions, it rose in the east, and illuminated the darkness of Arabian ignorance. But here too the influx of a rude people gradually obscured the light of science, as their numbers were extended over the empire of the caliphs. The Turks and Moguls banished literature by the point of the sword, and the period of science, which the followers of Mohammed enjoyed, extended to little more than the space of five hundred years. It is worthy to be remarked, that while the light of knowledge beamed in the east, gross darkness, except in the Saracen kingdom of Spain, overwhelmed the regions and empires of the west. But as science and truth were banished from the nations, who received the precepts of Mohammed, so they again found an

asylum in the christian world; and even penetrated into many countries, which till then had been rude and dark.

Tracing the history of Egypt, from the earliest times till the present period, we have seen it sometimes in the light, and sometimes in the shade. When the day of science first rose, its beams illuminated the mountains of Egypt; and from them its lustre was reflected upon other regions. But in a country where the clouds of heaven are scarcely seen, the clouds of ignorance have long rested. As the brightness of the morning frequently forebodes a gloomy or unpleasant day, so the early splendour of Egyptian learning, appears to have prognosticated a woful season of darkness and dismay. While the schools of Alexandria endured, and while the colleges of Cairo flourished, the benefit of science was felt, and the dignity of Egypt was in part restored; yet these were but the occasional sun-shine of a lowering day, and served the more

effectually to make the darkness of the times impressive. When that nation shall again rise in its glory, no penetration can discover, and no heart can imagine; but Egypt enjoys many advantages of nature to make her a great and flourishing nation; and we fondly hope, that fortunate arrangements will restore her due rank, and for ever remove her weakness and disgrace. The importance which has lately been attached to that country, and the various views of Europe, may produce effects which will crown Egypt with prosperity, and restore her influence in the scale of knowledge and power.

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